

6<sup>d</sup>

PUNCH OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI—WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31 1951

6<sup>d</sup>

JANUARY

31

1951

Vol. CCXX

No. 5751

PUNCH OFFICE  
10 BOUVERIE STREET LONDON E.C.4

## That's worth knowing—

"I've always thought there wasn't anything to choose between tyres."

"Well, as I say, I've been driving a car most of my life, and I'd pick Firestone every time. There's a lot of difference, believe me . . ."

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It goes through a 3 ft. door with room to spare. Turns in a 56 inch radius. Travels loaded at 6½ m.p.h. Stacks up to 9 ft. 4 cylinder 8 h.p. petrol engine.

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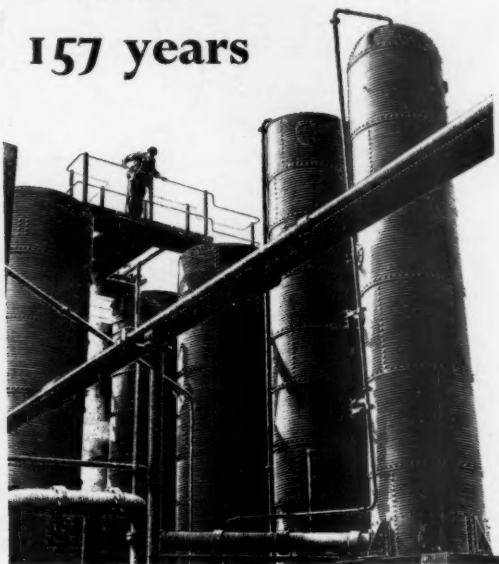
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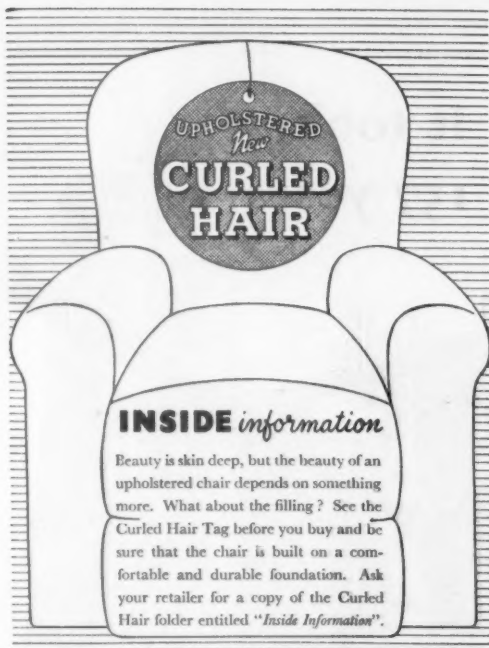
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The wonderful **TERRY** Anglepoise lamp helps to make life more tolerable... it does what it's told, without fuss or argument... takes any one of a thousand and one positions — and holds it. It puts the light on the work *not* in your eyes... a gentle, concentrated beam. In black or cream-and-gold. At all electricians or stores. From £4. 19. 6 (inc. p.t.) Pat. all countries.

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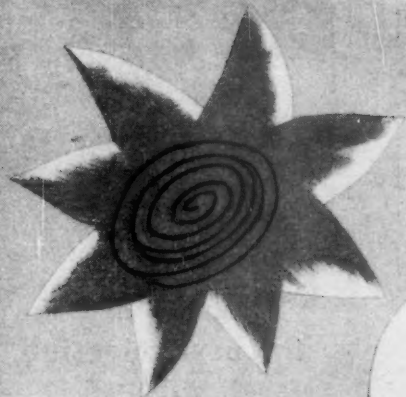


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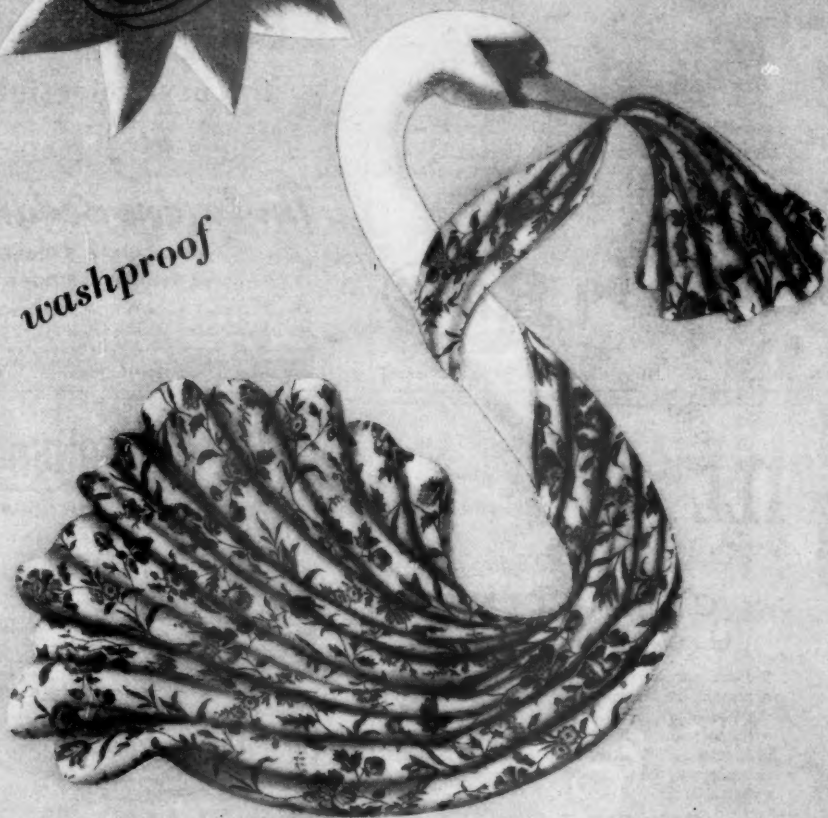
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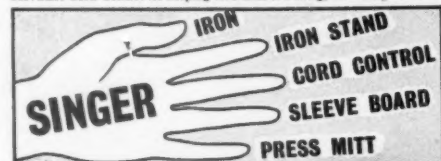
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Vantona 'Court' Bedcovers are available in a choice of blue, rose, gold or green at prices from £5.2.6d. for 70" x 100" to £10.15.0d. for 90" x 108".

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MOTOLUXE MOTOR RUGS AND FOOT MUFFS now obtainable in the home market.

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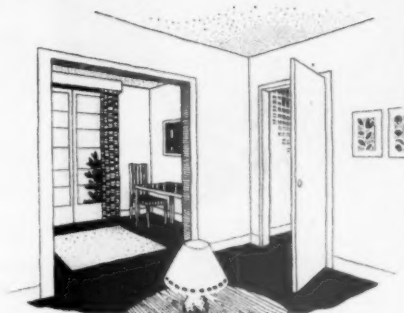
Perfect drink blending means "leave the bitters IN the glass & never throw it away."

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S.P.E.C. dries in an hour to an attractive, durable satin-like finish. After 72 hours it can, if required, be scrubbed without harm. Entirely different from paint or oilbound water paints, it is thinned with plain water. Very easy to apply. Can be used on new or old wood. Obtainable in delightful colours and suitable for both interior or exterior work.

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**SPEC**  
SILEXINE plastic emulsion coating

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In a full range of attractive colours.  
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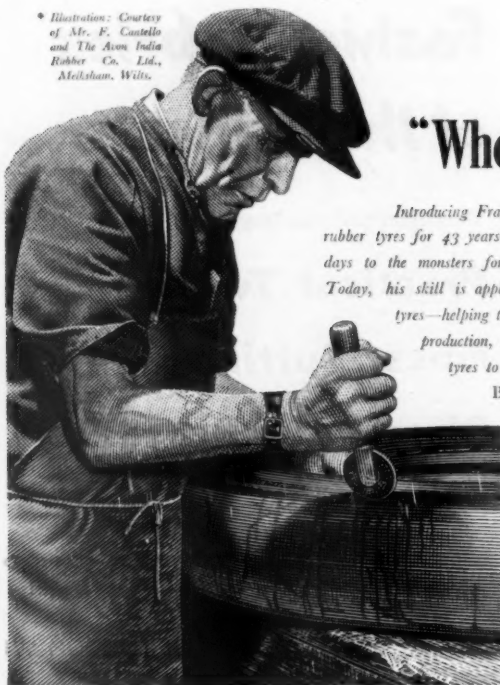
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**POTTER'S**  
CATARRH  
PASTILLES

price  
**1'9**  
a tin

\* Illustration: Courtesy  
of Mr. F. Cantello  
and The Asen India  
Rubber Co. Ltd.,  
Aylesham, Wilts.



Whenever Export figures are quoted there comes the accustomed reference to "expert British Craftsmanship." But... have you ever stopped to ask yourself...

## "Who are Britain's Craftsmen?"

Introducing Frank Cantello. He has been making rubber tyres for 43 years—from tyres for pioneer motoring days to the monsters for the wheels of modern transport.

Today, his skill is applied to retreading giant agricultural tyres—helping the salvage drive, helping home food production, and helping boost exports of new tyres to higher levels.\*

But does craftsmanship mean only handicraftsmanship?

In the manufacture of tyres today more and more

processes have been mechanised... but skill is as necessary as ever. In machine design... in setting up... in operation. And must there not be craftsmanship at every stage if the finished article is to be a masterpiece? Monsanto think so, and they follow this rule in making a range of chemicals for the many activities of the rubber industry.

Monsanto make over 200 chemicals for use in industry. Of widely varying application, they all conform to the highest standards of craftsmanship in chemical manufacture.



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Here's the biggest bargain yet in transatlantic air travel! Starting January 1st, fly from London to the U.S.A. and back at savings up to 39 per cent. under TWA's new 15-day fare plan. Take advantage of these big savings any time until March 16th—completing your trip by March 31st. And for longer visits ask about TWA's Thrift Season Fares, offering savings up to 26 per cent.

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says **LIONEL HALE**



When quiz master Lionel Hale pops a question the quizzees, if we may call them so, are in no position to crib; they have to rely on memory and the witty, subtle promptings of Mr. Hale. But, quizzes apart, there is no need, in everyday life, to wonder what exactly is what, or who is or was who; we can consult a work of reference. And for a general, popular, up-to-date work at a modest price there is simply nothing to equal the **NEW UNIVERSAL ENCYCLOPEDIA**

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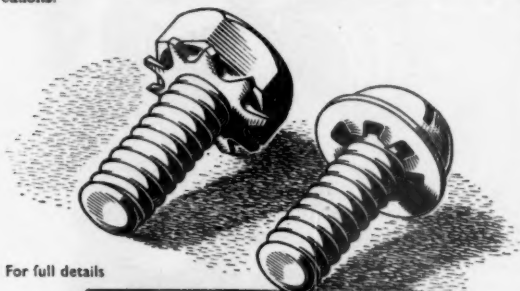
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NEW 181

# GKN are now making SEMS FASTENER UNITS

The vibration-proof combined screws and lock washers. Every screw fitted with the correct type and size of lock washer. Washers can't come off but are free to function correctly, efficiently. The units speed up assembly—reduce costs—provide better fastenings—simplify ordering and stock control. Sems units provide worth while savings for both large and small volume plants and have been proved in thousands of assembly applications.



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His family responsibilities will soon be over. Yours may last for many years. To provide for your family, should anything happen to you, is a problem which our Family Income Plan can solve quickly and inexpensively.

A few shillings a week protects your family should you die within the next 20 years by providing :- a lump sum to meet immediate expenses ; a regular tax-free income for the remainder of the 20 years ; a final cash payment. Should you, happily, survive that period, your policy would provide a handsome lump sum plus bonuses at 65 or at prior death.

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I ALWAYS TAKE A COUPLE OF "MEGGESONS" AT THE FIRST SIGN OF INDIGESTION

ASK YOUR CHEMIST FOR  
**MEGGESON**  
BISMUTH  
DYSPEPSIA TABLETS

THERE'S NOTHING LIKE  
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## Mr. Remington shaves time



And doesn't waste it fussing with blades, cream and hot water. At home, in the office, anywhere, anytime, he just plugs in his Remington electric dry shaver and enjoys a quick, smooth shave in a matter of minutes. No lather, no blades, no bother. The tougher the beard the better the shave. Ask your dealer to show you the three latest Remington models.



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Shaving REMINGTON RAND LTD. (Dept. S.16) 1 NEW OXFORD ST., W.C.1

The ideal "get-well" gift for a sick friend  
TOILET WATER FOR INVALID USE  
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A KERFOOT PRODUCT OF CHEMISTS 5/-

**QUEEN ANNE SCOTCH WHISKY**



**HILL THOMSON & CO. LTD.**  
EDINBURGH Est. 1793

Holders of Royal Appointment to successive Sovereigns since 1838


## WHEN MEN WERE MEN AND WOMEN WERE WOMEN



THERE WERE GIANTS in those days, as the old saying goes. People in olden times mostly had a vigour, a gusto, a pleasure in living that is often killed by the bustle and strain of modern life. 'Sanatogen' gives you back that gusto, that pleasure. 'Sanatogen' creates new reserves which will recapture for you that vitality and excitement of an heroic age. It supplies essential phosphorus and protein to build up both nerves and body, in a form the system can easily assimilate.

## SANATOGEN THE NERVE TONIC

*'Sanatogen' (Regd. Trade Mark) is obtainable at all chemists from 5/6d, inc tax.*




*By Appointment*  
MOTOR MOWERS MANUFACTURERS  
CHARLES H. PUGH LTD.

# ATCO

## IN FEBRUARY

The work of overhauling and servicing a large number of Atco Motor Mowers is in full swing at the ten Atco Depots throughout the country. Atco Owners who wish their machines attended to in time for the start of the mowing season are urged to contact their Atco Depot without delay.

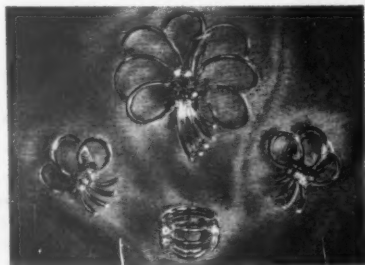
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WHITWORTH WORKS  
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FEBRUARY						
S	4	11	18	25		
M	5	12	19	26		
Tu	6	13	20	27		
W	7	14	21	28		
Th	1	8	15	22		
F	2	9	16	23		
S	3	10	17	24		



... but if Aladdin's story had been written today his treasure would have included palladium. Like gold and platinum, palladium is a precious metal, chosen for fine jewellery for its beauty, rarity, value and the way it responds to the craftsman's touch.



# PALLADIUM

Platinum Metals Division, The Mond Nickel Company Limited,  
Sunderland House, Curzon Street, London, W.1





# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



## CHARIVARIA

A MUSIC-HALL artist, who arrived recently in this country, claims to have eyes like a cat, which enable her to see in the dark. She is thus able to do her shop-window gazing after 5 P.M. when the crowds have gone.



The East German Government, having dutifully purged the Punch and Judy show by turning the characters into contemporary political figures, is now assailed by a Soviet marionette expert, who says that "to turn Punch into a party functionary harms the reputation not only of Punch but also of party functionaries." Mr. Punch finds himself in cordial agreement with at least half of this judgment.

An advertisement prepared by the British Travel Centre in New York exhorts Americans to "Come to Britain in Festival Year" and goes on "You'll find, too, abounding comfort in Britain now . . . with food (including famous British delicacies) plentiful in restaurants, hotels and inns." Though it's only fair to say that the Roast Beef of Old England is still mostly on their side of the Atlantic.

"Married couple at Parihohonu Station, Otoko. Man milk, kill and garden, wife cook two men."

Advt. in New Zealand paper

This man not want.



"The chairman, however, said he could not alter his ruling, and Mr. Keesey, in protest, picked up his papers and walked out of the Council chamber, saying: 'It is contrary to Standing Orders and I shall not sit down and stand it.'"

"Clevedon Mercury"

Thus clarifying his attitude.

When a goldfish found abandoned in its bowl in Piccadilly was taken to the R.S.P.C.A. their comment was "We have no idea how a goldfish came to be in Piccadilly at such a time." At any other time, of course, the streets are paved with them.

An evening paper correspondent asks when theatre managements "will ban, once and for all, the eating of peanuts." The answer seems to be in the lap of the gods.

"THE BEST IDEA  
FOR THE FESTIVAL YEAR  
A TRIP TO  
SOUTH AFRICA."

Advt. in "The Times"

Is that kind?

←HOTEL & CATERING EXHIBITION /



## BALLADE OF THE COST OF LIVING

"The Ministry of Labour states that on December 12, 1950, the official index figure of retail prices was 116, the same as at November 14."—*The Times*, Jan. 20.

I HAMMERED on a Great Man's door.  
 "O Ruler of us all," I cried,  
 "Behold how retail prices soar!  
 Inflation starts his ghastly ride!  
 How can this state of things abide?  
 This crisis there is no disguising."  
 A distant, booming voice replied:  
*The cost of living is not rising.*

"Oh, sir!" I wailed, "but, since the war,  
 The price of things has multiplied  
 By two, and three, and often four:  
 This surely cannot be denied?  
 In you, our Mentor and our Guide,  
 This blindness is demoralizing."  
 Again he thundered, in his pride,  
*The cost of living is not rising.*

"I came," I shouted, "to implore  
 Your aid, and not to carp or chide.  
 What did we give you office for  
 If not to govern and decide?"  
 Then, as the massive doors flew wide,  
 I heard sweet voices, harmonizing  
 This chorus, grave and dignified:  
*The cost of living is not rising.*

You know as well as I, they lied.  
 Prince! It is merely tantalizing  
 To cry, above the mounting tide,  
*The cost of living is not rising.*

R. P. LISTER

## TROUSERS FIT FOR ZEROS...

THE suggestion, made in this paper as long ago as last July, that some sort of exchange and mart should be set up to enable Class Z men with two pairs of khaki trousers and no jacket to do business with trouserless two-jacket warriors of similar stature has not been taken up by the Government.

Pallas Athene, as readers of *Dr. Smith's Classical Dictionary* will recall, sprang fully armed and with a mighty war-shout from the head of Zeus, but if Messrs. Shinwell and Strachey imagine that anything of the kind is within the compass of Z men they are living in a fool's paradise. Some of us might manage the war-shout, but, for the rest, I only wish Strachey and Co. could see my greatcoat. I write in ignorance of what the terms of the official pronouncement are to be, but my bet is that no guidance at all will be given on the

best way to smarten up a coat that has been dyed dark blue, had the holes in its shoulder straps filled with plastic wood, and been thrown buttonless over the bonnet of a 1938 saloon on cold nights. Would the Navy accept the wearer for light work in coastal waters? Or just the coat in lieu? My bet is, again, no.

I had a plan for urging all Z men to turn up to work, on an agreed date, in uniform, just to let the authorities see how much needlework has to be done before we are, in all respects, fit for service. But I dropped it. This is not a time, as the Marquess of Salisbury has well said, for junketing. The mood of the people is serious and resolute (*the Marquess of Reading*) and anything in the nature of an unqualified beanfeast (*Salisbury*) would strike a discordant note (*Reading*). Their Lordships were talking, it is true, about the Fun Fair in Battersea Park, and urging that at least the British people should be warned not to embark on "useless and extravagant expenditure at the Festival" (*Salisbury*—you will find reports of their speeches in last Wednesday's paper, just alongside the "Luxury Route to the Tyrol" advertisements), but they would agree with me, I think, that the sudden appearance in the streets of stockbrokers and barristers in caps, F. S., leather jerkins and striped trousers would lead to jollification and "might react on armament production" (*Lord Teviot*).

Of course the War Office may have ample stocks of suitable clothing for those they decide to call up. I don't know. But I do remember the peculiar appearance on parade of men in civilian overcoats in the early autumn of 1939. It was not that they were embarrassed particularly; they had no buttons to clean and could count their blessings. But their chances of becoming lance-bombardiers, at a time when a lucky decision to turn right instead of left was enough to mark a man out for acting non-commissioned rank, were gravely prejudiced. Commanding officers are slow to give stripes to men whose coats are already herring-boned with them from top to bottom. I merely ask Mr. Strachey to bear that fact in mind.

May I also enter a protest, on behalf of Class Z, against the term itself? The letter is just about the end. It has a last-resort, a sort of "Omega Boys" air. Somebody in the Adjutant-General's Branch, one supposes, suggested it in 1945 in the belief that if released men were ever needed again it would be at so remote a date that only a few white-haired, arthritic old honorary captains would answer the call. "Z," it was felt, would describe this tottering bunch to a nicety. Whereas, in fact, apart from an occasional twinge, we are in the prime of life. The War Office is not commonly accused of preparing for the war after next, but on this occasion they seem to me to have blundered into over-optimism.

Some letter about the middle of the alphabet would suit our age and ability better. Not "M" class, which suggests destroyers, nor "N," for that is so often, mathematically, the last of a series. What about "O"? I like "O." It has rotundity, and solid worth. What is more, it could be known, officially, as Zero—or "Z" for short.

H. F. ELLIS



**FURTHER OUTLOOK: NONE ISSUED**

"Can't anyone tell me what to wear?"



*"I'll be frank with you—it's a trifle damp."*

## ALL'S FISH THEY GET THAT COMETH TO NET

**N**EXT question, please!" repeated the chairman of the Brains Trust for the fourth time, looking round the village hall and wondering if the Speaker of the House of Commons had as much difficulty in inducing people to catch his eye.

"What's other fish?" asked a pair of spectacles, standing up at the back of the hall.

"Will the questioner amplify?" said the chairman helplessly.

"What's other fish? What you see on fish-paste. Salmon and other fish."

The chairman inspected his team and selected Mr. Bates. Again he had that feeling of desperation. What the blazes did the Speaker do when even the Cabinet wouldn't catch his eye?

"Mr. Bates!" he said sharply.

"Well, fish-paste isn't my subject," said Mr. Bates, looking up reluctantly. "But I suppose other fish means any fish that isn't salmon."

"That, I think," said the chairman, "answers our—"

"Isn't there some law or other," persisted the spectacles, "whereby

all made-up food has got to have what it's made up from on the label?"

"Hear, hear!" said a sympathetic turtle-neck sweater.

"Mr. Hammond?" said the chairman.

"I'm not sure, but I believe there is," admitted Mr. Hammond (Law).

"Then why don't it on fish-paste?"

"The term 'other fish,'" explained Mr. Hammond, "is probably intended to be comprehensive."

"It's comprehensive all right. It's so darned comprehensive it don't fulfil the letter of the law. There'd be a fine old row if a butcher sold meat just as meat, and didn't say what kind it was."

"That's right," agreed a briar pipe. "Even if he was only guessing."

The Brains Trust conferred.

"Technically fish is fish," announced Mr. Hammond, "irrespective of the kind of fish it is. Therefore it is perfectly in order to term it—ah—fish."

"In my opinion," said a bitter milk-bottle-top-shopping-bag, "other fish is simply and solely a nondescript plume for tinned snoek. They've got it off their hands by passing it over to the fish-paste people."

"In which case," accepted the spectacles, "it ought to say so on the label. 'Salmon and Snoek,' it ought to say."

"If the component in question were snoek," said Miss Gorton, who usually came in at Number Three after the opening pair had taken the sting off the attack, "the label no doubt would say so."

"Meaning," said a hand-painted American tie, "they don't know or care what sort of fish they bung in with the salmon."

"It is probably any fish that happens to be available," said Mr. Bates. "Doubtless it varies according to the catches."

"It could be a coarse river-fish, then," said the spectacles. "And there's plenty that can't eat river-fish, so it isn't fair not to warn 'em. Why, it could be whale, which is stuff I can't eat."

"Whale is not a fish," said Mr. Bates, scoring a point.



"Yes, and why don't they give the proportion?" demanded the turtle-neck sweater. "Half salmon and half other fish, they could say, couldn't they?"

"It wouldn't be true," said the briar pipe.

"If this other fish, whatever it may be, predominates, so to speak," said the spectacles, "it certainly ought to be called 'Other Fish paste' instead of 'Salmon paste.'"

"Something in that," said the American tie. "When you put salt on your egg you don't say you're having salt for breakfast."

"What about the quality, let alone the quantity?" said the milk-bottle-top shopping-bag. "They ought to tell us more about the salmon. Severn, Scotch or Canadian. First-grade, second-grade or household."

"I must call the questioners to order," said the chairman. "We are not discussing salmon, we are discussing other fish."

"You pipe down," said the American tie. "Let's hear from the platform."

"I do not think the manufacturers are under any obligation to be more precise in describing the salmon utilized," said Miss Gorton. "Salmon is salmon, just as other fish is—is—"

She stopped.

"The conclusion," said the chairman, "seems to be that other fish may be defined as any fish that is not salmon."

"What about when it's lobster and other fish?" inquired the spectacles. "Is other fish still not salmon?"

"I'll bet it isn't salmon," said the briar pipe.

"In the case of lobster, salmon could be other fish," conceded Mr. Bates carefully, "but it would not have to be. In any case, the questioner must remember that lobster and salmon in all probability do not mix."

"Too rich altogether," murmured Miss Gorton.

"Say for the sake of argument it's herrings," continued the spectacles, with determination. "Which, mind you, is highly likely, herrings being cheap and plentiful. Wouldn't

it be only straightforward to label the paste 'Salmon and Herring'?"

"Or 'Herring and Other Fish,'" suggested the briar pipe.

"I think we have given quite long enough to this question," said the chairman, coughing. "We have already decided that other fish is—"

"A red herring," interjected the briar pipe.

"—is a makeweight of fish other than salmon. If the questioner requires fuller information I suggest he sends his question to the Food Ministry."

"I'll do that," said the spectacles grimly.

"You might let us know what they answer," said the chairman.

"Next question, please."

COLIN HOWARD

## MY HAT

IT takes, according to my paper, Ten years to train a bowler-shaper,

But now young men are few Who wish to learn to shape a bowler.

I must admit I on the whole agree with them. And you?

MARK HOLLIS





## JANUARY ZOO

TO the pensive mind the Zoo in winter has a private low-toned charm, with some of the melancholy of a deserted seaside town. One expects to meet other convalescents on the Esplanade, to shudder at the harsh waves seen between the deck-chairs piled in the empty bandstand and to hug the shelter of bare trees with their salted branches brushed inland by the gales. These delicate sensations need quite a bit of organizing, as unless you keep to the out-of-the-way corners, you find the Zoo remarkably full of visitors, and everything except the most summery sideshows, like the Children's Zoo, going full swing. The Zoo is never quite empty; I was told that even in fogs there are visitors, who strike matches and peer between the bars of the cages. On any reasonably fine day there will be schools and parents grimly determined on the education of their children and children grimly determined on the festification of their parents; there will be self-improving foreigners and the usual lonely Londoners, finding among animals the welcome they miss in their gaunt bed-sitting rooms. On my visit a week or two ago there were

also several photographers and a man who was explicable only as a werewolf out on licence.

The central part of the Zoo is very much the same in January as in August, only rather more comfortable. You can get nearer to the exhibits and there is not the

pressure of the crowds the whole time. It is the season for repairs, and the trenches, duckboards, heaps of refuse and gangs of workmen produce the atmosphere of A.R.P. or of a theatre being built during rehearsal. At the moment they are putting in a central system for heating all the houses, which will greatly reduce the consumption of fuel. Except temporarily, not one of the houses is closed in the winter. The whole cast is in the show, though I omitted to visit the Aquarium and the Reptile House, feeling the atmosphere would be a little cold-blooded for winter.

I had expected there would be a good deal of hibernation going on and that half the animals would be invisible or, at the best, just odd ears and snouts sticking out of compost heaps; but they told me that very few of the Zoo animals hibernate anyway, and that those which do so in the wild state are merely reacting to a drop in temperature which the heating of the Zoo houses avoids. Many of the animals get acclimatized—apparently being born in the Zoo does not make any difference to acclimatization. Tigers can be seen rolling in the snow and some tropical creatures insist on remaining outside in weather which would keep a Londoner huddled

indoors. All the animals can wander in and out as they like, except the delicate-chested chimpanzees, which are firmly kept in the warm, though other zoos sometimes criticize London for coddling them. The chief winter change in the gardens is the reduction of pressure on the catering. I inquired about hibernation among waitresses and was told that a good deal of the seasonal labour was supplied by students working their way through college.

While biologists regard the Zoo as a place to work and adults as a



stimulus to wonder or nostalgia or cynicism, children regard it as a fair. They charge about shrilling. They pull their parents ever onwards to the next cage. They never bother about drawing moral lessons from the brute creation or evolving theories suitable for conversation with other non-zoologists. They consider that the animals are there for their amusement, like slot-machines, and if they don't perform they sneer at them and pass on. They get through a good deal of food during their exploration and transmute it into energy with frightening speed. I am not one of those who agree with children being eaten by bears—it is cruel to give a creature whose normal diet is honey something tough in a sailor-suit—but I saw one ginger-haired boy who would have been much improved by being brought up by apes. He would have had all the advantages of the Scouts without any new-fangled objections to strict discipline.

For me the real heart of the Zoo is

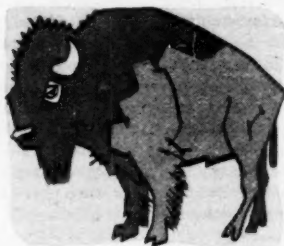




in the adjacent homes of the hippopotami and the giraffes. Some visitors like to find resemblances between animals and human beings, seeing in the pensive chimpanzee a little

old man or in the penguin a civic father. I like the fantasy and exorbitance of Nature—the *extensio ad absurdum* of the mouth in the hippopotamus and the neck in the giraffe. The Giraffe House is the most attractive building in the Gardens, like an early railway station merging into a viaduct. Its yellow-tooth brick and the tall, rounded arches underneath which the giraffes can pass without lowering their funnels have the patina which outmoding gives to what has once been functional.

The birds—except the parrots, which are carefully listened to in hope of uncensored scripts—do not get the attention their beauty deserves, perhaps because they are



less lethal than the lions or snakes, though the giant birds of prey in their vast, paleotechnic cages are terrifying enough—cruel, seedy and agelessly foreign. In the open sanctuaries, like the Pheasantries, the stock is confusingly mingled with birds that have got in from outside, ticketless and really not entitled either to see or be seen. This pleasant stretch along the canal is fantastically bright and varied and theatrical.

The traditional animals, the elephants and camels and tigers and monkeys, are so much what one expects that they are a little dull. They look sleek and successful and



bored. The larger killers, spoiled by years of "coos" from children, have a house with tiered platforms for sightseers, a domestic arrangement which would make anyone blasé. At feeding-time, 2 P.M. in winter, the excitement among the audience is frantic; but the beasts accept their red, raw joints with the over-familiarity of cricketers faced with autograph books. There was less snarling and rending than I expected and more gentle, systematic eating.

The monkeys, exhibitionists who will get neurotic if neglected, are far from off-hand with visitors. They work frenziedly the whole time. They bark, chatter, boom, leap, wriggle, fight and play with straw and old tyres: the effect is that of a prep school during the last lesson of term. Watching the gorilla, a revolting-looking person like an Arnold Bennett miser, was a lady whose scarf showed delicate scenes of eighteenth-century high-life. Here, as elsewhere, I found the less human the more interesting. Mandrills and baboons, some like dog-faced lions, with muzzles resembling bad negatives and ears that would make a bird of paradise jealous, take one into a world of ruined temples and jackal-ridden cemeteries and Egyptian gods. Perhaps the

oddest atavistic thrill comes in another part of the Gardens, where the bison, all horn and muscled shoulder, stimulate mental images of Crete and bull-roarers and priests in minotaur masks.

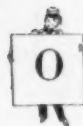
Every attempt is made to give the animals the food and temperature that suit them. They soon learn to discriminate among the off-ration dainties proffered by visitors. The natural backgrounds provided are rather half-hearted. Even the Mappin Terrace is not much like a mountain, though its crags probably seem cosy to the goatish creatures in the top row. The Zoo's main concession to verisimilitude is to put lopped and slanting tree-trunks in the cages. The small bears have trees which are approached by ladders!

The Latin names on the cages (how sad that the creatures can only see the backs of them and must wonder, as if in Alice's wood, what they are called), the excellent signposting and the efficient arrangements for catering, salvaging lost property and telling you how to get home make the Zoo seem more streamlined and less fantastic than it really is. However, men whose lives are spent with porcupines and chameleons and turtles that swim vertically must surely develop a streak of fantasy, and this occasionally peeps out. Where other establishments say bluntly "Beware of pickpockets," the Zoo, more self-consciously observant and less peremptory, remarks "Pickpockets have been known to operate here."

R. G. G. PRICE



## AT THE PICTURES

*Battle of Powder River—Branded*

**O**F the two large Technicolor Westerns to turn up in the same week, the better, I think, is *Battle of Powder River* (Director: GEORGE SHERMAN), though each has qualities that might combine in a single very good one. *Battle of Powder River* is of the kind that didn't begin to come our way in quantity until a year or two ago, the kind I have made a habit of calling the Cavalry-*v.*-Indians Western. One knows from the first that Indians will be involved, for "Injun music" (*bom-bom-bom* on the drums, loud fourths from the brass) begins with the credit titles and is constantly reappearing. An excess of background music of one kind or another is, in fact, an irritating fault in this piece; one can sometimes hear the sound of wagon-wheels, the jingle of harness and so forth *underneath* it, but they would be far more effective without its competition. The story is on a pattern more or less familiar: on one side the Cavalry in their fort (bluff colonel: PRESTON FOSTER), on the other the Sioux, and an eminent scout (VAN HEFLIN) with divided

loyalties. The latter has a more immediate preoccupation: the fort's garrison includes a young officer he has reason to hate, a young officer who has done a good deal of Indian-killing and whose eye glints frostily at the chance of more. You can guess how *that* turns out. The film has the visual charm of all good Westerns—I know I have used those words before, probably often, but it's exceedingly difficult to find new ways of praising good examples of a recognized and almost rigid type. (Imagine trying to sum up your gratified appreciation, in different words each time, of several successive pieces of excellent toast.) I don't remember the details of the plot—YVONNE DECARLO seems to be the heroine, and Mr. HEFLIN the hero, though I don't recall any clench at the end—but in this sort of thing, do they matter?

The other one is *Branded* (Director: RUDOLPH MATÉ), which was no doubt conceived as a "vehicle" for ALAN LADD, but turns out, notwithstanding its contrived melodramatic plot, to contain remarkably good things. Above

all else it is visually magnificent: the scenery is that of the Rio Grande country, and to look at it is a pleasure even when one is supposed to be concentrating on (for instance) a cold-blooded murder among the minor villains in the foreground. Moreover it has very little background music, allowing those interesting sounds—and ordinary sounds properly used can be as interesting as words—to have unimpeded effect. From time to time, too, it makes excellent use of dead silence. The story presents Mr. LADD (always in a check shirt, for easy identification when fighting or galloping in company) as a gunfighter on the run who allows himself to be tattooed with an imitation birthmark so that he can pose as the long-lost son of a wealthy rancher. When he falls in love with the beautiful girl who is supposed to be his sister he thinks better, or worse, of the whole affair, and once our sympathy has been aroused for the parents, of course the *real* son has to be dug up. All is smoothed out (if you need to be told) at the end. In most departments this is no more than a competently-done Western with the normal quota of familiar ingredients; but its fine pictures (apart from the noble vistas, there are such memorably charming glimpses as that of trees in spring green by some water) give it distinction.

\* \* \* \* \*

## Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

A very interesting Italian programme at the Academy offers two works by LUCIANO EMMER: *Sunday in August*, a little "cross-section" story about people spending a summer day on the beach at Ostia, and *The Feast of St. Isidore and the Horrors of War*, which gains remarkable effects with edited shots of detail in pictures by Goya.

Latest releases are nothing much, though *Into the Blue* (10/1/51) has entertaining stuff. Remember the earlier ones, *Crisis* (8/11/50) and particularly *All About Eve* (20/12/50). RICHARD MALLETT



[Branded]

Arms for the West

[Battle of Powder River]



## GREENGROCER

"YOU know what I want," said my wife. "Don't let him keep you talking."

The greengrocer, however, while maintaining an air of external indifference, is always lying in wait, cloth cap inevitably on, inside the shop. The hair sprouts eagerly from his upper lip and ears, ready to respond during his fine damnatory passage, and to droop at the harrowing cathartic stages.

I asked for potatoes.

He bobbed them into the basket and began.

"Kuh."

"How are we, then?" I replied. "Thriving?"

"See that about bulk buying?" he asked. "They're not going to stop it. After all the experience we had."

I distinguished.

"Ah," I said confidently, "you don't mean bulk buying. Buying in bulk is always cheaper. You mean *long-term contracts* in a setting or decreasing world pri—"

"They ought to be devalued," he said. "I've said that long enough."

"What's that?"

"Ministry of Food," he snarled, digging the scoop savagely into the pile of potatoes. "Look how we're off for it with them."

"Yes indeed," I said, "but they say the world population is inc—"

"Kuh! Remember the Royal Commission?" he demanded. "You see it? Them family allowances. It's not the better types that are breeding."

This seemed a little hard; it was, actually, because we were that I had taken to getting the vegetables instead of my wife.

"And the nuts," he went on with a relentless, hollow laugh.

"Nuts?"

"What nuts did I get? Instead of buying nuts they go and try to grow 'em. Did I see a single peanut for it?"

"But I thought those were for marg—"

"Kuh!" The moustaches blew out indignantly. "Don't tell me. Anything else?"

"Some sprouts, please," I said.

"Hah! Look at 'em. Rubbish. Shouldn't buy 'em," he advised. "Got to take what I can get. Cabbage?"

"That would do, I suppose," I said.

He pulled down a sheet of old newspaper and wrapped it up. Suddenly he stopped and pointed to a headline.

"Look at that, then," he commented bitterly. "I don't know what next: WHEAT CROPS TRAMPLED BY EMUS."

"Well, it makes a change for them," I said, "from hanging around crossword puzzles."

"Bread and butter, though."

"Well," I said, "it can't surely make all that difference. I mean, if thirty thousand emus linked arms and charged in line across Australia it would be different."

"Australia! You just see," he

warned. "The price'll go up and no Marshall aid. Take wool. That wasn't emus. Vests. Used to ride up, now they go up. Cost of living's prohibitive. Onions? Carrots?"

"Tomatoes?"

"Shouldn't touch 'em. Turn you stone deaf I shouldn't wonder. Meat's down again. Sign the pledge and turn vegetarian. It was better even under old Strachey, and they must've made him War Minister to starve the Russians out."

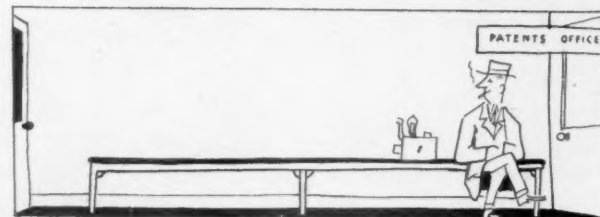
The moustaches drooped. This was good-bye.

"Mind how you go," he concluded gloomily. "And the next, please."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Are those," asked my wife, "the vegetables?"

"It was better under old Strachey," I said. "You used to go and get them then."



## ALL THE MEN GO OUT

"ALL the men go out of the room," said Mrs. Whimper, "as far as I remember."

"Oh, no," said Cora. "You're thinking of the one where one lady gets blindfolded at a time."

"Nobody gets blindfolded," said Rodney, "if it's the one I'm thinking of."

"Yes," said Mrs. Whimper, "somebody does. I'm certain of that."

"Somebody always gets blindfolded," yawned a lady from next door, who had come in to ask the right time and stayed to eat most of the nuts.

"Do you mean the one where you come in in pairs and somebody dresses up as a ghost?" I asked.

"No," said Mrs. Whimper, "that's for children. And it's no good my telling you all which one it is, or it won't be any fun for you when you do come in. I'm just trying to remember it, that's all."

"If I know anything," said Humblestone, looking up from a map of Paris and environs at the back of his new diary, "it won't be any fun anyway. The last time I went out of the room, when I came back the lights were switched off and I was almost clubbed to death with rolled-up Sunday papers."

"There's a much better one than that!" shrieked the lady from next door. "Where you come in and they blindfold you and you fall into a

little bath of water and have a circle marked on your forehead with soot!"

"Yes," said Mrs. Whimper, "but that's not the one, and neither is the other. The one I mean is, all the men go out . . ."

"I'm sure you're wrong," said Cora.

"I know this much," said old Mr. Rimmer, having prodded the fire into an acceptable blaze and settled back with his feet on the hearthbrush, and a box of dates on his chest, "if anybody goes out, male or female, it's not going to be me."

"In my opinion," continued Cora, "it's one man at a time that goes out."

"No," said Rodney. "That's the one where you hide something behind the clock on the mantelpiece, and tell him when he's getting warm."

"Can't anybody crack an almond?" said the lady from next door.

"I always think Murder is a good one," I said. "I remember once when Uncle Jack was found dead in a wardrobe, with both doors locked on the inside, and it turned out he was the murderer himself. It took us two hours and a half to sort that out, and he smelt of mothballs for the rest of the evening."

Mrs. Whimper clapped her hands.

"Now, all the men go out," she

said decisively, "and Cora will help me to remember. There's too much talk. Out you go. We'll call when we're ready."

So we all trooped out, except old Mr. Rimmer, and began to behave like men who have just been turned out of a room while ladies get up a game. Humblestone wandered into the hall, took an old putter and a baby's shoe from the umbrella stand, and practised approach shots on to the fourth stair. Rodney and a man with no hair discussed some antlers over the dining-room door. I followed a group into the kitchen, and sat on the edge of the table, nibbling the bits that are trimmed off sandwiches, and talking about permutations.

After about five minutes Humblestone wandered in, with Rodney and the man with no hair and the baby's shoe, and somebody found a bottle of apricot brandy. While we were drinking this out of cups, and playing pontoon with a three-ha'penny limit, the antlers fell down in the hall, and broke. Rodney said he had been up on a chair, fiddling with them. Laughing heartily, we finished the bottle, and the man with no hair took off his coat and balanced a saucer on one finger. He couldn't make it twirl, though. We hid the pieces behind the fridge.

It must have been half an hour later when we decided to go and see if the ladies were ready yet. We found them in two groups, one talking about chilblains, and the other telling fortunes with cards. They seemed surprised to see us.

Humblestone put the baby's shoe on the sideboard, and we all grinned encouragingly.

"Well," said Rodney, "that was fine. And now," he went on, rubbing his hands and moving to the fireplace, "all the ladies . . . it!"

Old Mr. Rimmer snare peacefully.

6 6

"Mon. and Tues.  
FORSYTE SAGO  
Filmed in Technicolor."  
Cinema programme

A change from the eternal corn.





*"Murphy—kindly bring me the files on Arsenal and Sunderland."*



*"Edward—I've made up my mind. I'm going to be painted."*

### ON NOT PLAYING CARDS

THERE is a lot to be said for not playing cards. The work is unexact, and if it does not earn money it does at least save it. It saves bridge rolls too, and pencils, and having to stop talking. You can see that bridge is really what I have in mind when I say cards, and it is what all we non-players had in mind when we decided early in life to avoid card games of every description. Only thus, we felt, could we armour ourselves against a world that waited to spring out from under its little baize-topped tables and seize us by the collar and take three-and-fourpence off us. A laughingly professed ignorance of any real difference between the red and the black splodges on cards appeared to be our only defence.

Why, one may ask, this terrible fear? Did someone

tell us at an impressionable age that bridge players ate their young, or sold you opium on the side, or raised hell if you rolled a card up and pretended it was a telescope? I don't think so. I think I would call it a perfectly rational dislike of having to treat a game as if it was work. Well, we said, we'd show them. Whist, yes. Bridge, the one with the bidding and other people winning money, no. Thus fortified, we stepped out into adult life and towards the ambush.

The result was both disappointing and typical. For one thing, we hardly ever seemed to meet people who played it—perhaps word of us had got round—and for another, if people did ever start unpacking little tables in our presence they were inclined to suggest that this wasn't much in our line and wouldn't we



rather watch? And watch we did, with a great show of interest, moving from player to player and telling the others what they were missing by not being allowed to look. When I say that our interest was altogether genuine, and that we were deeply conscious of not being good at the only thing at the moment worth being good at, and when I add that we personally in our old whist days never saw a card higher than the nine of clubs, I think I have put the situation fairly.

Through the years the danger of being asked to play bridge has entirely disappeared—I suppose as we have grown more and more mildly intellectual and settled on a plane that would seem as alien to, say, racing motorists as to, say, the people on the *New Statesman*. We non-players find that we have to spend our evenings with one another, just talking, and if anyone felt whimsical enough for a nice game of Snap there probably wouldn't be a whole pack of cards in the house, and by now we shouldn't know the rules.

Secure, then, from the entire card-playing world, we can now sit back and enjoy the frenzied scene through such peepholes as gangster films and the Sunday papers. We don't get much from the films. From the beginning of film history card players have sat tilting their chairs with their legs crossed and their hats pushed back and a cigarette stuck to their upper lip, while the game, whatever it is, is played by spinning cards across the table and ends after a couple of spins when the players leap to their feet and knock each other cold. We sit smugly, telling ourselves we are well out of all this. We realize it even more clearly when we read the quarter-columns in the more reflective newspapers. This isn't bridge as we knew it. It may be canasta of course, but even if it isn't, all this talk about Six No Trumps is as far removed from our rather fixed idea of bidding as the new-fangled loud-speaker wireless set is from earphones. In our day, if we said One Club we weren't being psychic or whatever you are, we were just taking a sensible view of our hand.

On an earphone mind such as ours the impact of canasta can only be dimly imagined, even by us. We've all read about it. You may wonder why, but you wouldn't if you saw us reading Warehouse Wanted on the back of *The Times* round the brussels sprouts. Canasta is even more fascinating, because it is possible, by holding your mind a few inches off, not to understand one single word of the whole thing, which is a little more than you can say about the warehouses. As canasta spreads we grow more and more complacent. I cannot describe our attitude better than by comparing it with that of the average man towards a sewing-machine. Let them worry; they started it.

All this has taken me a long way from Patience and Telepathy, about the only two manifestations of card activity that we really hold with. Patience players are the knitters of the card world. All they ask is elbow room, with an occasional word of wonderment; but I think what we like most about them is the way they go through life tidying cards into suits. Not like bridge, where someone sweeps them up and clops them together anyhow.

Telepathy, or whatever you call the game where someone looks at the front of a card and you look at the back trying to guess what you're meant to be thinking—that isn't like bridge either. You're *supposed* to make your mind a blank. You spoil things if you look ahead. And getting the cards wrong is as clever in a way as getting them right. If I am mistaken and these are a bridge player's qualities, then they can start teaching us canasta.

ANDE

## BACK ROOM JOYS

CATAclysmic WEATHER

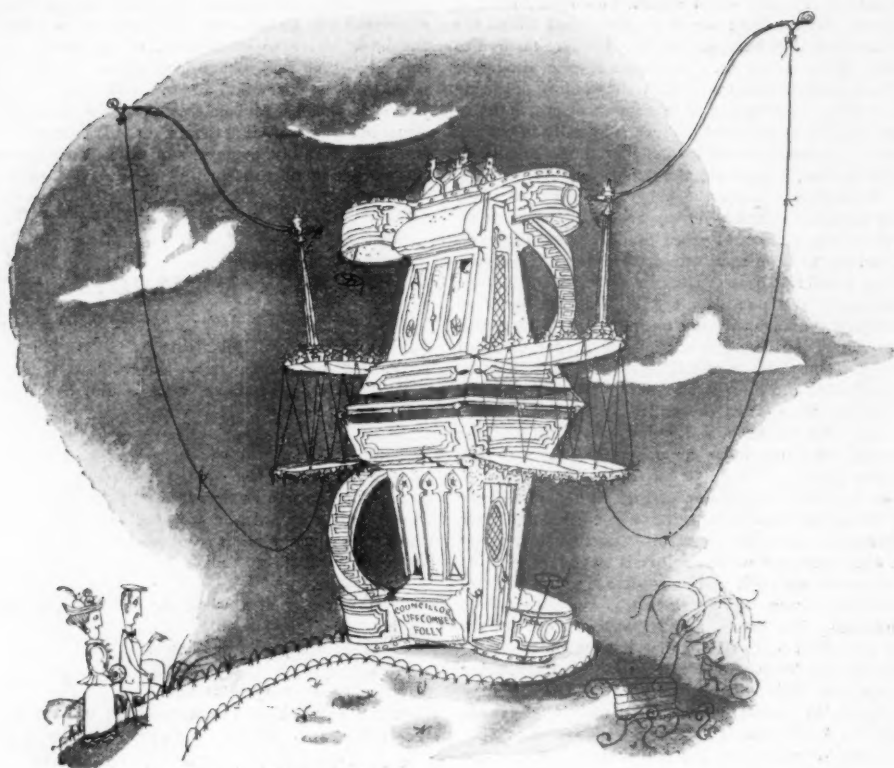
IT has blown a gale all right;  
We had to get up, jam all the windows tight;  
Great trees crashing down, what a din, hardly hear  
things above it . . .

How we love it!  
How important we feel  
Reading in the papers that it was real,  
'That it was a record and we were in it!  
Gusts up to ninety miles a minute—  
No, hour; what do we care—  
We were *there*,  
We had a tree, well a whacking great branch, then,  
immense,  
Smashed down *miles* of our fence!  
Our 9.8  
Was twenty-seven minutes late.  
Chimneys have toppled, ceilings have hurtled down  
plaster. . . .

Delectable ruin, thick gossip wreck and disaster!  
Let it blast, freeze, flood, let the heavens spurt—  
Assuming (we always assume) we don't *really* get hurt.

JUSTIN RICHARDSON





"There! I knew nobody would be silly enough to burn old tramcars."

## EVERY MAN IN HIS COSTUME

### ACT I. SCENE I

*A Hall. Enter three GENTLEMEN, creatures of the Duke, fantastically dressed.*

FIRST GENT. Well met, sire.

SECOND GENT. Ay, well met indeed.

THIRD GENT. Well met.

FIRST. The wind nips shrewdly, we have fasted since  
The noonday bell, our palliaments are thin,  
Ill-fitting, and bedawbed with tawny grease.  
Yet 'tis well met—since were we not met well  
This meeting would well want the wherewithal  
To comprehend what is afoot withal.

THIRD. Eh?

FIRST. Peace, thou marplot. Art thou not aware  
Our Duke Malario being much incensed  
With Semiragus, yet run mad with love  
For Semiragus' daughter Margaret—  
She who was put when young to that same  
nurse

As Rosaline the niece of Coramel—  
Hath hither come to Syracuse (disguis'd  
By subtle garlandings of feigned hair  
As Voltingors, the uncle of the queen),  
Accompanied by seven men-at-arms,  
A mother, sisters three, a male quartet  
With voice well fitted for the timely song,  
A jester and two simpletons, and last  
But scarcely least by us, whose purpose is,  
While as the groundlings blunder through  
the mirk  
Whispering loud excuse, to tell in brief  
The place, the time, the people, and the plot,  
What hath, what doth, and what will next  
befall?

SECOND. Well said, thou show'st what one main verb  
may bear

THIRD. When parenthetic clauses bend their aid.  
Glad am I not to be a man-at-arms!

FIRST. Silence, thou flimsy-bearded overplus!  
Thou art indeed a novice if thou think'st  
Thou shalt escape the soldier's rav'ning pike.  
Before the hour has struck I look to see  
This gawded doublet and those wrinkled  
tights  
Give place to armour wrought of silver  
cord,

And thy wan visage glare a ruddier tan:  
Nor do I doubt that ere the midnight chime  
Thou shalt see many changes of thy state,  
As Fate and our Producer may devise.

SECOND. Ay, and thou wert a meacock to disdain  
The lot of them whose destinies are cast  
Low in the world, as Second Citizen,  
First Gaoler, Centinel, or He Who Runs  
The Potman's Errands at The Eagle's Head.  
For such a man the slapping of a thigh,  
Or cushion o'er the midriff deftly strapt,  
Or waggish simulation of the itch,  
Or a judicious grossness oft avails  
To lure th' attention from a speech forgot  
Or gesture out of place.

FIRST. 'Tis very like.

But haste we now away. Adieu.

SECOND. Adieu.

THIRD. Adieu, companions both!

[*Exeunt FIRST GENT. and SECOND GENT. by  
several doors.*]

THIRD (*solus*). Now I am sole,  
And, in the interval while Coramel  
Looks for his habergeon but finds it not,  
All idly may contrive, like John-a-dreams,  
How I would have this motley world to wag.  
I have long dream'd of such a kind of life,  
Where none might hold the scene but  
gentlemen,

Where conversation were the only grace,  
Unmarr'd by passion or by images  
Crammed thickly in as tunnies in a jar.  
O I would have all smooth, all semblable—  
Gent should intrigue with gent, and third  
gent's son

Should wed the nameless daughter of a  
fourth,

While yet a fifth should, ev'n as I do now,  
Remit the duties of a starting-bell  
And taste the pleasures of soliloquy:  
Nor should the clinquant lives of emperors,  
Their consorts, senators, archbishops, aunts,  
Their porters, serjeants, constables, nor  
clowns

Disrupt the sober tenor of our way.  
But hope's the luckless whipping-boy of  
time,

For pale I see the hands (as must ye all)  
Wave from the wings in signal that my task  
Is done, since all are ready to begin.

Now eager for the stage comes Coramel.  
The scene begins to cloud. Worthies, fare-  
well.

[*Exit THIRD GENT.*]





## COUNTRY KITCHEN

SMOOTH shelves, standing high,  
lined with light, a dapple-gleam  
by grave oak caught from sky  
with leavy hands, now bound in beam;  
broad of base, firm of foot  
as trunk of tree stands, wind-square,  
steadfast with grappled root:  
bright with brass and china-ware  
the crone-brown dresser, flame-tinselled high,  
drowns in dream of days long by.

Huntsman with horn and coupled hound  
through wide wood riding on the stone-jar's round:  
how on the hill where the day lay green  
the heart leapt high as the scent struck keen!  
Dancers lithe in lustre-gold  
hand to hand in their love's close hold:  
how in the morning the heart grew light  
dancing again through the memoried night!  
Shakoed swordsman, booted, spurred,  
reining his courser, clarion-stirred:  
how through the long year the heart told, slow,  
of hope that would bring what fear saw go!





Muslined maidens gathered for the bidding;  
 bride and groom in the mounted wedding  
 highway-hastening, loose of rein,  
 never to ride apart again!  
 Cups for the christening; finery from fairing,  
 ram under thicket, spaniel staring,  
 shepherd piping, gipsy roaming  
 seated by stream, her dark hair combing:  
 laughter that sang and grief unspoken  
 left in litter of trinket-token.

Tall in shadow, dark with days,  
 the lean clock mutters—*nothing stays*:  
 memory-piled where the fire-glaze gleams  
 the crone-brown dresser counts its dreams.

Tree in China by the angle-armed pagoda  
 leaning by the lake where the oared boat plies,  
 bowing by the bridge where the flower-soft odour  
 lingers round the lovers under bar-cloud skies.  
 Wing to wing the doves fly, fanning at the sun,  
 hand in hand the lovers wait beside the gate:  
 love is never dying, day is never done:  
 love like the tree stays, patterned on a plate.

ALUN LLEWELLYN





## THE RAIN IT RAINETH . . .

**I**N his latest report the Director of the Meteorological Office has made it perfectly clear that 1950 was an exceptionally good year for umbrella manufacturers. In England and Wales average precipitation—of rain, not crises—was fifteen per cent higher than the average for the period 1881-1915: 40·4 inches compared with 35·2 inches. And Scotland and Northern Ireland returned even better figures.

Business started quietly in January (1·6 inches in England and Wales), recovered sharply but deceptively in February (5·7 inches), and then slumped violently. Not until July, with 3·9 inches, could the manufacturers feel that the corner had been safely turned. Then in the space of two all-too-short holiday months (do you remember August and September?) more than ten glorious inches of rain cascaded upon the resorts, cricket grounds, race-courses and umbrellas. Sales rocketed, and the umbrella makers squelched happily back to work. October (a mere 1·7 inches) was disappointing, but November and December, with 6·0 and 3·0 inches respectively, rounded off a bumper year in fine style.

In their annual report the manufacturers speak in glowing terms of Loch More with its precipitation of 102·68 inches, Douglas (51·83), Keawick (65·15), Falmouth (51·31), and Bolton (52·3), but express their keen disappointment at the evidence of backsliding furnished by Hastings (27·93 inches), Rhyl (25·57), Balmoral (30·43), Kensington (26·05), and other places. After briefly analysing the country's economic situation the report draws attention to the need for more bus shelters and more covered accommodation at our sports grounds, but suggests that now is hardly the time to undertake capital expenditure of this

nature. Finally, there is a special tribute to the American scientists who are "pushing ahead so gamely with experiments in rain-making."

It was not altogether surprising perhaps that I should have been greeted with outside grins when I arrived soaked and steaming at a Leyton umbrella factory the other day.

"No umbrella?" they said.

"Afraid not."

"Serves you right, then!"

It wasn't an ideal overture, but we soon shook hands and introduced ourselves.

"There are roughly one hundred and fifty separate pieces in a modern umbrella," they said—"eight gores, or panels of fabric, eight ribs, or spokes, eight tips, eight gits—"

"Isn't it supposed to be unlucky," I said, "to put up an umbrella like that indoors?"

"It is never unlucky to put an umbrella up," they said, "anywhere."

"I wonder how much truth there is," I said, wishing to stand my ground, "in the scientists' notion that the climate of this planet of ours is gradually improving. It is said that the polar ice-caps are receding and that we are heading for a millennium or two of exceptional dryness."

Every face turned smartly to the window. The rain was drumming against the panes in a most theatrical fashion. Their smiles broadened.

"There's an old rhyme," they said:

*"The rain it raineth on the just  
And also on the unjust fella:  
But chiefly on the just, because  
The unjust steals the just's  
umbrella."*

"To the best of my recollection," I said, "I've never even borrowed an umbrella."



At length, under the stimulus of tea and a good drying coal fire, our relations improved and I began to assemble useful information about one of Britain's old craft industries.

It is generally accepted, they told me, that China was the first country to hear the click and the peculiar and satisfying percussive *thrum* of the opened umbrella. That was some four thousand years ago. In those days umbrellas were tokens of rank and affluence: the emperor sheltered under no fewer than twenty-four of them, and it was an act of lese majesty for a mandarin to appear in public with an equally umbriferous retinue. Be all that as it may, we can be reasonably certain that umbrellas of a sort first became popular in England in the early eighteenth century. They were massive brutes capable of withstanding a deluge from the mouth of a gargyle (roof drainage was very crude) and of cracking the stoutest skull. Their covering was a heavy cotton fabric, oiled or waxed, which was held in place by whalebone ribs mounted on a stick as thick as a tent pole.

Men's umbrellas retained these structural features for more than a hundred years until (as the historians point out) alpaca and steel replaced oiled cotton and whalebone and until (as I point out, but with becoming modesty) a police force armed with real truncheons was established.

The earliest women's or, rather, ladies' umbrellas came here from France, where they were valued for the protection they afforded against rain and sun, and were, in consequence, gay, colourful and frilly. As instruments of coquetry they had to be light enough to fall noiselessly in the wake of a scheming demoiselle and their coverage had to be no

larger, it seems, than was necessary to allow the water draining from the fabric to run unchecked down the neck of an attendant male.

Ladies' umbrellas haven't changed much in style or coverage since the eighteenth century, though they are now less instruments of coquetry than weapons designed to drive home the advantage which women enjoy over men in queues—especially bus queues.

In its time the umbrella has of course attracted the attention of numerous inventors. There have been seven-storied umbrellas, built on the wedding-cake principle; lop-sided umbrellas, based on the idea that the head of the user rather than the stick should be exactly underneath the centre of the cover; whistling umbrellas (they whistled when put up); folding umbrellas and telescopic umbrellas; non-drip umbrellas fitted with sponges at each tip; umbrellas with windows in the cover—to enable the user to see his victim; and an umbrella equipped with a drainage gutter and a drip-collecting glass flask strapped to the stick.

Very few umbrellas manage for long to remain completely sound in wind and limb. In the sick-bay at Leyton I saw thousands of patients awaiting surgical treatment; some had been blown inside-out, some had been pushed out of shape by narrow doorways, and others, very many others, had suffered compound fractures in grids and gratings. Yes, easily the most common cause of disability in men's umbrellas is the grid with its fatal attraction for the ferrule.

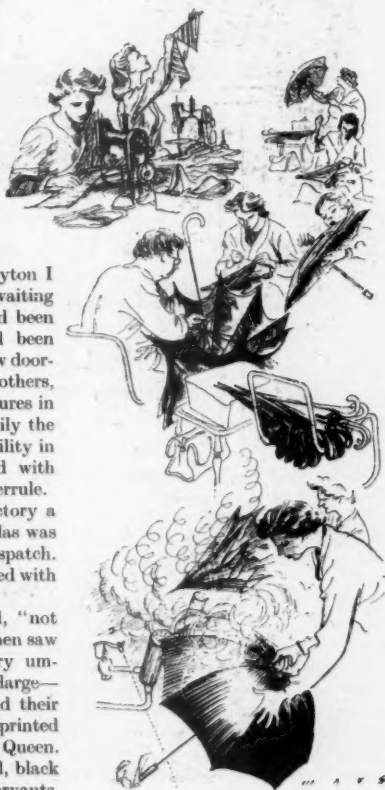
In one corner of the factory a large consignment of umbrellas was being made ready for dispatch. Girls were working at top speed with wrapping paper and labels.

"No," one of them said, "not Manchester-Colombo." I then saw that these were no ordinary umbrellas: they were extremely large—pavement-width almost—and their thick cotton covers were printed with pictures of the King and Queen. It's no use trying to sell dull, black brollies to Cingalese Civil Servants.

In another corner I saw large suitcases being stuffed with triangular pieces of tartan fabric, and employing my usual methods I soon discovered that more than half of the factory's output of five hundred dozen umbrellas a week is the work of part-timers or out-workers—most of them women who acquired their skill in the factories and then married and stayed at home. The factory supplies them with their special sewing-machines and with regular allocations of material from which they run up umbrella covers. So it is no exaggeration to say that British umbrellas are the genuine hand-made article. . . .

It was still raining heavily when I left the factory, but they didn't offer to lend me an umbrella. So I borrowed one instead.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



## ALL IN THE GAME

ROLAND wished he had been wearing his bow-tie; there are times when it is important for an artist, even a staff artist, to look like one. He advanced to within six feet of the great mahogany desk and waited.

Mr. Roubadour did not look up. Instead he neatly gathered the pack of cards which he had been studying, flirted them in a stylish shuffle and quickly dealt two hands. He pointed a plump finger at the cards on Roland's side of the desk, near the silver cigar box, and said "You start."

If his colleagues hadn't warned him that Mr. Roubadour had no more humour than a duck-billed platypus Roland might have smirked respectfully and left it at that. As it was, he came forward and sat hesitantly on the edge of the interview chair. The cards felt clammy as he nudged them into a compact parallelepiped. He turned up the first card fumblingly. Mr. Roubadour whipped his over with a crackle. Roland turned up his second—his third—fourth—fifth—

"Snap!" said Mr. Roubadour. He leaned across and swept up

Roland's cards, but he did not go on playing. "That was a good snap, eh?" he said. He opened the cigar box, which faced Roland, turned it round and took out a cigar.

"Yes, sir," said Roland.

"Except," said Mr. Roubadour, his heavy face expressionless, "that it wasn't one." He lit the cigar from a desk lighter in the form of a baby bear hinged at the neck, then fanned out the cards deftly and tapped the fifth and the tenth. "Muffett and Bo-Peep. Not a snap at all, Mr. Who-is-it. Get me?"

"Er—" said Roland. The unease which had been mounting ever since the long, single note on the buzzer had snatched him from his drawing board seemed about to reach an awful culmination.

"You designed these cards?"

"Yes."

"Your first assignment with us?"

"Yes, sir. It was—"

"Ever design Snap cards before?"

"No. But I've—"

"But you've played, eh? We've all played, Mr. Whatever-it-is. Now see here." The hairy wrists suddenly flickered; there was a whirl of colour at the finger-tips, and six cards had, as if by magic, arranged themselves in impeccable symmetry. Roland leaned forward. At first glance they appeared to be three pairs. Now he saw that they were all different—a Muffett and a Bo-Peep, a Horner and a Boy Blue, a Hey-diddle-diddle and a Tom Tom.

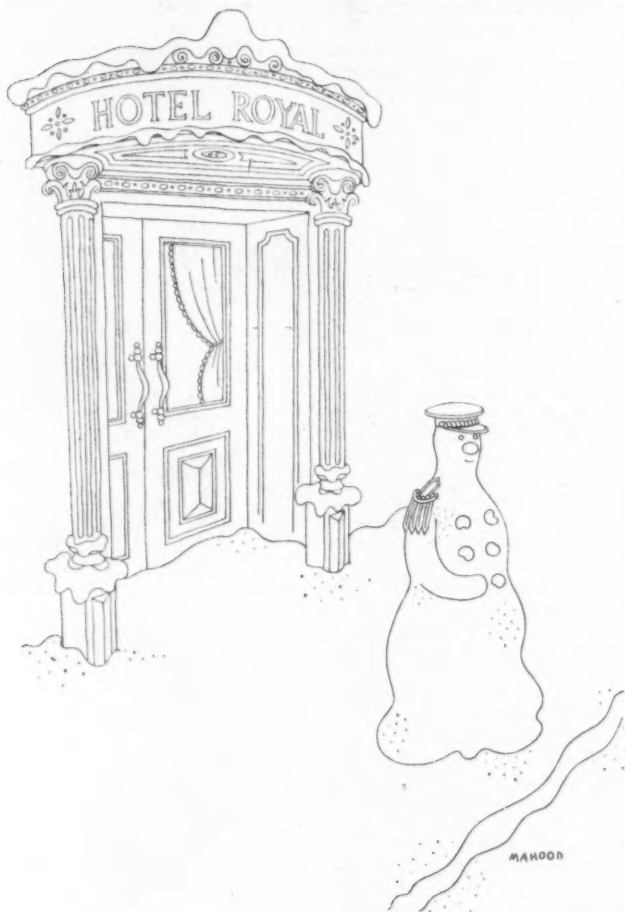
"Bit too smart, some of you artists, eh?" said Mr. Roubadour.

"Well," said Roland, "I thought that if I—"

"You thought that if you made the Peeps and Muffetts as near as dammit the same—"

Roland coughed. "The Peeps have sheep."

"I know, I know. And the Muffetts have tuffets—done very tiny in the corners, where a player can't hardly see. You thought," continued Mr. Roubadour, "that you'd be squeezing loads of laughs out of Rule Six, wasn't that it? You know Rule Six, I take it?"





"Anyone calling 'Snap' in error," repeated Roland automatically, "places all his upturned cards in the pool.' But I don't see—"

"It's because you don't see," said Mr. Roubadour, "that I'm going to the pains of expoundin'." He puffed a blue cloud across the desk. "You're wet-nursing human nature, Mr. What-is-it; what you might call painting the lily, see? Your Snap player will confuse one picture with another from plain panic; no need to *try* and fox 'im, till he can't tell a Tom Tom from a Diddle without a magnifying glass. Get me?"

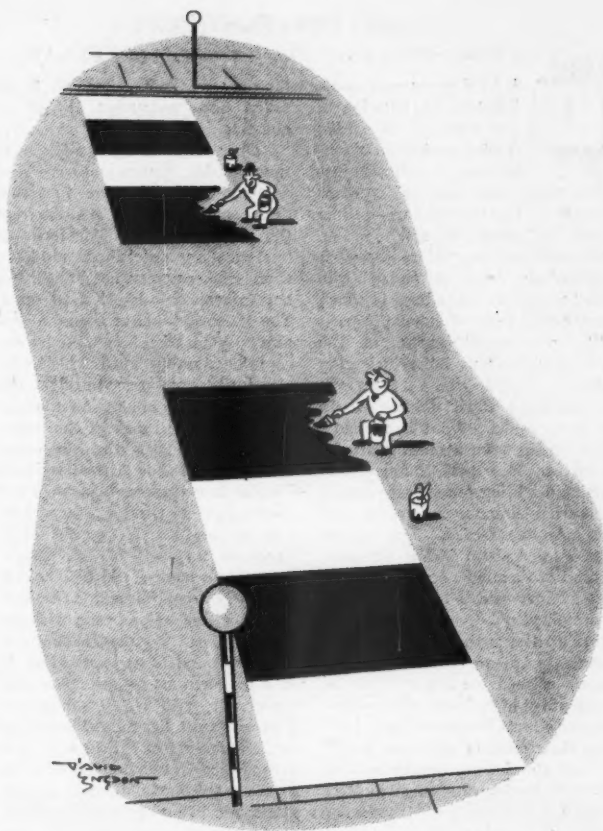
"But there's a fiddle in the Diddle," said Roland.

"Done tiny in a corner," said Mr. Roubadour, "where a player can't hardly see. Look at the psychology. A player calls Snap in error, plain panic, and when he sees the two cards aren't really alike at all, why, he laughs, and places all 'is upturned cards in the pool, takes it all in good part, you might say, under Rule Six. But if he sees they are alike, except for fiddles and tuffets done tiny in corners—then what? Feels swindled, that's what; gets mad, throws his hand in, starts looking under the table for the carton, see who made the cards. 'Oho,' he says, 'product of Famous World Recreations, eh? That's the last time we have any of *their* stuff in the house!' And before we can say 'Snap Pool' we've lost five thousand pounds of Tiddleywinks and Snakes-and-Ladders business to European Kiddiephun. See what I mean, Mr. Er—?"

"I'm sorry," said Roland, who realized by now that even a bow-tie couldn't have stood up to Mr. Roubadour. "I'm afraid I didn't quite—"

"Psychology and attention to detail," said Mr. Roubadour. He swept up the pack and slapped it down crisply on Roland's side of the desk. "And I've made one or two other notes," he added, holding out a sheet of foolscap. "I'll see the new drawings to-morrow afternoon."

Roland took the cards in one hand and the sheet of paper in the other. The writing was very large



*"I've an idea we're going to get two white spaces together in the middle again if we're not careful..."*

and legible, with childish loops and twirls.

"Tom Tom. Why playing pipe? Father was piper, not Tom. Why kilts? Who said anything about bag-pipes? Bo-Peep. Why carrying sheep? Sheep very heavy, and lost anyway (see copy). Muffet. Spider in top-hat strikes false note. They have eight legs. Tuffet done too tiny. O. M. Hubbard. Not old enough. Dog too fat. Cupboard too—"

Mr. Roubadour's voice broke in upon Roland's reading. It had a new note, a sort of sour richness,

suggesting curds and whey. "Get going, get going," it said. "Try, try again. Remember we want the best, Mr. Whoever-you-are—not only for Famous World Recreations, but for England."

Roland, who had begun to back towards the door, stumbled on the thick green carpet. Mr. Roubadour's heavy face was momentarily bisected in a grin of waxen jocularity; with his cigar he was pointing over his shoulder to a framed notice on the wall, which announced in florid ornamental type: "This is FESTIVAL year!"

J. B. BOOTHROYD

## AT THE PLAY

*Hedda Gabler* (ARTS)—*The Merchant of Venice* (OLD VIC)

**I** HAVE never read a satisfactory explanation of the last line of *Hedda Gabler*, spoken in astonishment by *Brack* just after *Hedda* has considerably shot herself. "Heaven help us—people don't do such things!" is an extraordinary remark to escape a particularly cynical judge who must frequently have been in touch with every form of suicide, especially, one would guess, in the darkest melancholy of the Norwegian winter. It is as wide of the mark as the Lord Chief Justice would be if he asked "What is a tort?" Had *Hedda* been a meek creature, scared of mice and thunder, one might just bring oneself to suppose that what *Brack* meant to say was "People like *Hedda*," but as she was a noted pistol-packin' momma, a kind of daemonic Annie who had lately demonstrated her idea of hospitality by potting at him as he came up the path, no such excuse stands. Are we to believe that *IBSEN* wished to show that in moments of high drama even judges become simple human beings, shedding their crust of sad experience? Or that *Brack* was overwhelmed by his undoubted sense of social nicety? Or that *IBSEN*, the great stickler for detail, who could if he had wished have imbued a pin with significance, was flashing us a final signal that

his play was not, after all, to be taken too seriously? I go on guessing.

Only two things could have saved *Hedda*. One would have been a job in a circus, where, in a rich dress, shooting cigarette stubs from the mouth of a terrified stooge to hysterical applause, she would have exercised her vanity, her malice, and her unhealthy addiction to guns. The other would have been a receptive psychiatrist, on whom she could have unburdened expensively her futile boredoms through the long empty afternoons. As it is, she is *IBSEN*'s most repellent character, a figure of evil flecked with neurotic imbecility. At the Arts Miss *JEAN FORBES-ROBERTSON*, in a welcome return to the London stage, just fails to hit her off consistently. There is no lack of intelligence in a performance which is often extremely accomplished. Dark and pale, her fine voice ironic without effort, Miss *FORBES-ROBERTSON* shows a complete understanding of *Hedda*'s tortuous nature. The icy superiority with which she greets *Tesman*'s aunt, her refined brutality to *Tesman* himself, the awful glee with which she baits *Løvborg* to return to the bottle, her mad delight at his suicide, and lastly her morbid grief at its inelegance, all these are accurately expressed. Yet the power is intermittent, as if the actress were



(The Merchant of Venice)

**Burning Hatred**

Shylock—MR. POWYS THOMAS

Portia—MISS JILL SHOWELL

at times infected by the boredom of the character. This impression is strengthened by Miss *FORBES-ROBERTSON*'s tendency to mock too openly, in the very faces of the people *Hedda* is leading by the nose. Mr. *ROY RICH*'s careful production weakens here, as it also does in letting the men slow down to a speed that sometimes becomes ponderous; but in spite of these faults the curious force of the play shows through.

There is a good, fruity, poised performance by Mr. *CAMPBELL SINGER* as *Brack*, a fair *Tesman* by Mr. *ERIC BERRY*—enough, anyway, to drive a milder woman than *Hedda* into a storm of irritation—and a *Løvborg* by Mr. *ROBERT RIETTY* sufficiently compelling to suggest the depth of her untidy passion.

The Young Vic Company, turning from Stevenson's blood-and-thunder to the colder villainies of *The Merchant of Venice*, seemed a trifle sobered by Shakespeare. The zest which gave *The Black Arrow* such life was still to be seen in their acting, but most of them spoke the verse with a hint of starch in their voices, as if afraid of being caught out in irreverence to the Bard. On



(Hedda Gabler)

**Smouldering Fire***Hedda Tesman*—MISS *JEAN FORBES-ROBERTSON*; *George Tesman*—MR. *ERIC BERRY*; *Judge Brack*—MR. *CAMPBELL SINGER*

this account naturalness suffered a little, and also the added interest in character that comes from swift adjustments of pace. On the other hand every word was honestly delivered to the back of the house, and for that major blessing and a production which fitted together in a very workmanlike fashion we can be grateful to Mr. GLEN BYAM SHAW, whose care was reflected in sound acting and in frequent visual felicities. An airy architectural set took the court scene neatly and yet switched Venice to Belmont by a simple change of backcloth. Miss GAY DANGERFIELD, who did both set and dresses, uses colour attractively, and Mr. CECIL CLARKE wasted none of it in lighting arrangements that showed off to excellent effect the Old Vic's prodigious new system.

For all *Shylocks*, up against the jiggery-pokery of a monstrously unethical corner of Christendom, one must feel sympathy, but I felt less than usual for that of Mr. POWYS THOMAS, who went all out for malignancy. There is certainly a case for this, and he managed it well. Miss JILL SHOWELL made a slightly prim *Portia*, when one considered the girl's unconventional agenda, but handled the trial bravely. I liked particularly Miss JUNE BROWN's *Jessica* and Mr. KEITH MICHELL's *Bassanio*; Miss CHARMIAN EYRE's *Nerissa* was also good, and so was Mr. DENTS QUILLEY's *Gratiano*. But the one who seemed most at home was Mr. JOHN GARLEY as a *Launcelot Gobbo* of Stiltonic ripeness. Mr. GARLEY is a droll any company could be proud of, and when the Young Vic go to Holland, after one week of *The Merchant* at the Old Vic, he is likely to do great havoc among the burghers.

#### Recommended

Elves and Christmas slapstick still retard new plays, said to be circling desperately, like airliners impatient to land. In the meantime Anouilh's *Point of Departure* (Duke of York's) is a piece of rare quality, beautifully acted, and *His Excellency* (Piccadilly) is too good to be missed.

ERIC KEOWN

## THE PANDA IN DEFENCE

THE Zoo is void of giant pandas now;  
But we who love them now and then repair  
To seek them in the Himalayan snow—  
For they can get a proper diet there.

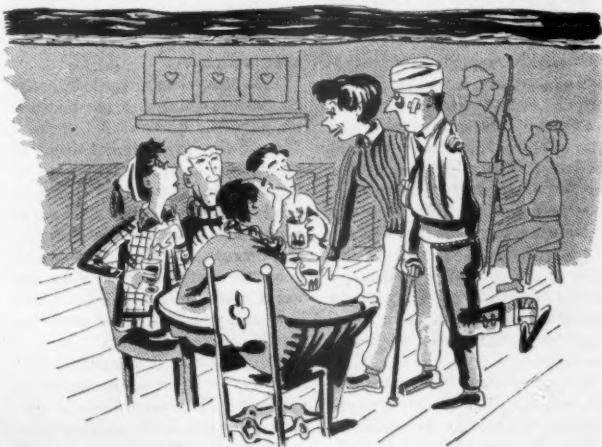
There, on some barren Himalayan slope,  
The pandas play; and, playing with them, see  
The takin, or Tibetan antelope;  
The yak, the "grunting ox of Tartary";

The tahr, or Himalayan mountain-goat;  
The Bactrian camel with its two-humped back;  
The ounce, the leopard with a silver coat;  
The "grunting ox"—no, that's another yak.

And on those heights, subdued as yet by no man,  
We spy, with what unmentionable dread,  
The tracks of the abominable snowman  
And more abominable Chinese Red.

Rash Communist invader from afar,  
Fly, lest you learn with unforeseen regret  
The habits of the takin and the tahr  
And gentle-seeming panda of Tibet.

B. A. YOUNG



"... darling, this is George Binwell—he's been teaching me to ski."



## IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT



Tuesday, January 23rd

Whatever else interests it, the House of Commons is certainly intensely interested in what are called personalities. Therefore when Parliament assembled to-day, after the recess, there was great expectancy about the appearance before the House of the Ministers who had just been "re-shuffled" by Mr. ATTLEE.

Members had not long to wait for the first of them, for, as Sir IAN FRASER rose to say "Question number one, sir," Mr. GEORGE ISAACS, who, when the House adjourned, had been a Cabinet Minister and in charge of the Ministry of Labour, jumped up to answer in his new capacity as non-Cabinet Minister of Pensions. But "Our George" is a friendly and popular person, and there was a general cheer when Sir IAN wished him happiness in his new job.

Not long afterwards the new Minister of Labour, Mr. ANEURN BEVAN, was called into action. He looked pale and a little tired—and was notably mild in his dealings with questioners.

Members seemed surprised at this and gave him a smooth passage—which seemed to surprise him. He was asked about the reports that certain Class Z reservists were to be called up, and promised that a statement would be made "very soon." When he added that the Press was to blame for any apprehension the prospect of a call-up might have caused among Z-men, a good many denizens of the Press Gallery raised their eyebrows, for they knew the—not precisely uninspired—sources of the stories.

However, nobody broke the truce, and Mr. B. was able to complete his turn at the Box without incident. As though sensing that all this peacefulness was not likely to make the House feel at home and normal, the Minister brought in a

reference to the Government's hope that it would be able to repair the neglect of past decades (and, of course, past Governments)—and everyone heaved the sort of sigh of relief that might arise from a lost traveller on sighting a familiar landmark.

Mr. GAITSKELL, the Chancellor, supplied another easily-recognizable landscape feature by expressing the view (obviously quite wrongly) that "the honourable Member will not expect me to anticipate my Budget statement." But he used the spring-



a-l

### Impressions of Parliamentarians

Lord Halifax

time cliché with his usual cheery smile and friendly nod, and none said him nay.

Mr. MORRISON was asked whether he did not think it a good idea to abandon the Festival of Britain, in view of the international situation, and for once he did not appear outraged at the very thought. He said firmly and calmly that it was not a good idea, and that the present—just because it was so grave—was a good time at which to show the world what Britain stood for and how many and diverse were her capabilities.

He said it so firmly and so confidently that he won a great roar of approval. Which seemed to surprise as much as it gratified him.

A moment later another great roar arose as Mr. CHURCHILL, fresh from a painting holiday at Marrakesh, walked in, to step to the Table

with a request for a statement on the situation resulting from the fighting in Korea and the United States' demand for the branding of the Chinese Communists as "aggressors" there. Mr. ATTLEE got his roar of cheers as he rose to reply.

He made it clear that the Government had not abandoned hope that the Korean affair might yet be settled by negotiation, and that the Cabinet did not at present favour any step against China which might make a settlement more difficult.

Interjections from the Government back-benches when the need for close co-operation with the United States Government was mentioned suggested a certain division of opinion between the Government and some of its supporters. Quick to notice this, Mr. CHURCHILL rose quietly and gravely to point out the imperative need for close agreement and accord between our Government and that of the United States, to which Mr. ATTLEE gave ready agreement, adding, however, that we ought not to abandon our principles or hope of a peaceful settlement.

The House went on to discuss a Bill designed to correct a few minor errors in the Town and Country Planning Act, 1947, and Mr. RALPH ASSHETON amused Members by referring to it as the "Ironing Out of Bloomers Bill." In this cheery vein the Bill went through at speed and the House rose early.

The Lords were talking about the Festival of Britain, and Lord JOWITT, the Lord Chancellor, fought a gallant action against those who, for one reason or another, wanted it postponed, abandoned or deprived of its Fun Fair.

It was an earnest and good-tempered, if rather gloomy, discussion, many noble Lords contending that in these grave times a Fun Fair was out of accord with public sentiment. But Lord JOWITT, in that convincing way of his, held





"Married a prince? No—Daddy's a woodcutter."

that a grave and serious time was just the time for a little fun and games, since all work and no play might make Jack Bull a dull boy. Which, said he, would be to play the Communists' game.

In the end Lord Jowitt and "Lord Festival" Morrison won the day, and the Bill to permit the Festival's more passive and sedate amusements to be viewed on Sundays was passed. Readers of these "Impressions" will remember that the Commons had already eliminated from the Bill, on a free vote, a proposal that the Fun Fair, too, should be opened on Sundays.

#### Wednesday, January 24th

Mr. Ernest Brown, when he was Minister of Labour years ago, achieved a sort of Parliamentary signature - tune by the constant use of the slightly elastic phrase "in the spring" whenever he was asked when some item of policy was to be made known.

It turned out this afternoon that Mr. BEVAN's promise of a statement "very soon" on rearmament and

the Z reserve meant next week, and not this week as most had anticipated. Mr. STRACHEY, the War Minister, deputising for the absent Defence Minister, announced the postponement, after Mr. ATTLEE had briskly produced a typed statement which Mr. S. had apparently mislaid.

There were many questions about the country's preparedness, and several demands that the good old Home Guard be set up again. Mr. STRACHEY, however, said that, as already announced, the H. G. would not be set up again unless there were an "emergency."

At the end of an uneventful Question-hour Mr. Speaker, with the co-operation of Mr. EDWARD FELLOWES, Clerk Assistant, provided a little excitement, in the form of a "flutter" on the chances of introducing Private Members' motions on a Friday to come.

This ceremony has all the thrill of a gaming table (well, *nearly* all, let us say), for Members put their names down on a list opposite numbers and then wait, in a fever of excitement, for the announcement

that they have drawn a lucky one. Mr. FELLOWES, with a flourish, gropes in a box on the Table of the House, produces a small piece of paper, opens it while Members sit expectantly on the edges of their seats, and then proclaims, in clarion tones, the number drawn.

By then the lucky winner is usually—prematurely—on his feet, trying to get breath enough to announce the subject of his motion. But the forms have to be observed, and Mr. Speaker, carefully running a finger down the list, couples the number with a name, which he declaims. Whereupon the winner declares the subject for debate.

There is usually plenty of variety. To-day, for instance, the subjects for future motions included the cleaner handling of food, a permanent body to deal with Commonwealth and Colonial problems, and the need for economy in the industrial use of coal.

After all this wild excitement it was a relief to move on to a nice quiet talk on local government in Scotland, salmon and fresh-water fisheries protection, and so on.



"How d'you like that? American tourists buying our export rejects!"

## UNFINISHED SERENADE

for Schubert's birthday, January 31

**K**ENNST du das Land, wo die Zitronen blühn?

Yes, and I've seen the golden orange glow  
In travelogues upon the silver screen  
For one-and-tenpence from the fifteenth row.

Who is it rides *so spät durch Nacht und Wind*?

The sound effects suggest a rogue in flight.  
The radio sheriff's men are close behind;  
They'll catch him before the announcer says "Good night."

*Horch! horch! die Lerch'* at heaven's high gateway  
sings,

The air is cool, the sun is large and red.  
We turn a switch and watch the soaring wings  
On television, lying snug in bed.

But Silvia, *was ist Silvia, saget an?*

There none may help. Each man must take his chance,  
Find her *im grünen*, pick what words he can,  
And strive to match your singing, immortal Franz.

HH

## LEFT-HAND TURNIP

**T**HE following extraordinary occurrence is reported by a correspondent in—

(I am not too happy about this. To be frank, I am not altogether certain that one hundred per cent of my readers will laugh over this anecdote until the tears roll down their prematurely careworn faces. The fact that the story is true, or at any rate as true as anything they are ever likely to see in print, is not necessarily a point in its favour; I have in my repertoire a number of true stories which no listener has yet allowed me to finish, whereas some of my published articles have been no better than downright fabrications.)

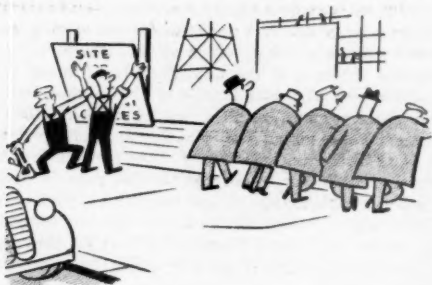
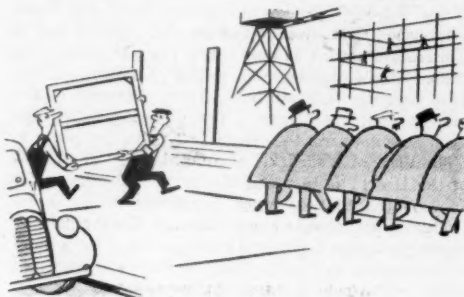
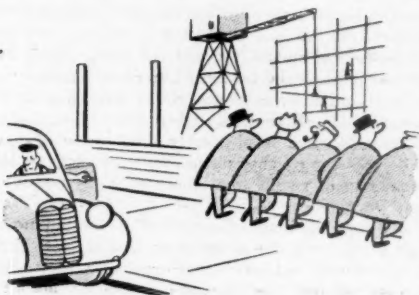
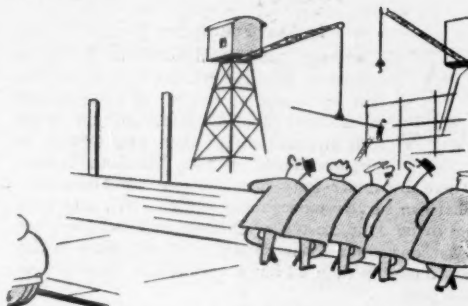
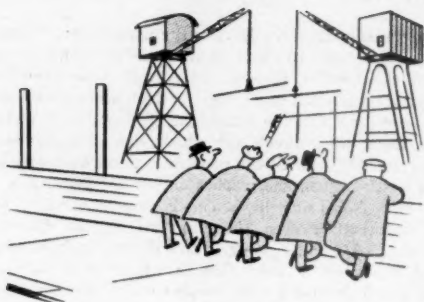
—a correspondent in Durban, Natal. He was walking along Berea Road, minding his business, when he felt a tap on his shoulder and, turning, found himself face to face with a tall, sunburnt, blue-eyed, short-haired man of some forty summers, who without preamble uttered the following cryptic words: "Left-hand Turnips Down." The man then went away in the direction of Smith Street.

(I am morally certain that several of my readers are harbouring the unworthy suspicion that this incident did not take place in Durban at all but in New Brighton or at best Blairgowrie, and that to go off from Berea Road in the direction of Smith Street would mean climbing an eleven-foot wall surmounted by broken glass. I am not prepared to argue with such readers. I am doing my best, with very little encouragement, to present a plain, straightforward account of the facts.)

The correspondent lit a cigarette and walked slowly on down Berea Road. To outward appearances he was unmoved; but inwardly his mind was in a turmoil. An assiduous student of John Buchan, he felt certain that the phrase "Left-hand Turnips Down" was either a timely warning from Sir Richard Hannay or else a message from Prester John intended for Henriques and passed on to him (the correspondent) by mistake. As he did not like to think he could readily be mistaken for a villainous Portuguese with bloodshot eyes and a yellow complexion he inclined to the former theory; and he was no little perturbed as to precisely what it was he was being warned against. His mind ran a good deal, he says, on the idea of a knife-thrust between the shoulder-blades; and the sight of a Chinaman emerging from a nearby doorway with a basket of washing made him jump like a startled hartebeeste. He was just wishing he had led a better life and resolving that if by a miracle he came through unscathed he would give up swearing and betting on horses when he stumbled and narrowly escaped being run over by a passing pram. Looking down at his feet he discovered that the turn-up of his left-hand trouser leg was turned down.

My correspondent, as soon as he had rectified this disarrangement, set off at a hand gallop in the direction taken by the blue-eyed, sunburnt stranger. The words "Swede of you to tell me about it" rang, he says, in his mind like a carillon of silver bells; but he never saw the man again.

G. D. R. DAVIES



## BOOKING OFFICE

## Ladies' Foursome



N average modern novelist is far more competent than the primitives whose reputation we accept at school. We are taught to admire Smollett, although he ranks with Lydgate rather than with Conrad or Virginia Woolf or Miss Elizabeth Bowen. There are under forty novels before "Middlemarch" that can survive modern competition. We may have no living Jane Austen or Dickens or Thackeray; but even our commercial detective stories show better workmanship than all but a very few of the novels of the past.

Miss S. D. Neill's *A Short History of the English Novel* scarcely glances at the novelists who have established themselves in the last thirty years, and in a literature as rich as ours thirty years is a very long time. One's confidence in critics' judgment of the past depends very much on their judgment of the present and, apart from a few generalizations, Miss Neill does not seem to notice it. To give two pages to "The Vicar of Wakefield" and nothing to "The Death of the Heart" is to prefer origins to fulfilment. Her book is the fruit of much experience in Extension Lecturing and spans along from the Elizabethans to Joyce, giving the beginner a sensible view of the ground to be covered and stimulating the more experienced reader with new facts, fresh assessments and an

occasional delightful joke, like the remark that "South Wind" restored to Capri some of the publicity it lost with the death of Tiberius. Miss Neill, apart from her neglect of her own times, has too fresh a mind for textbook writing, and the lack-lustre efficiency with which she deals with novels for which she does not care contrasts oddly with the penetration and authority of her writing when she reaches one of her favourites.

Miss Isobel Strachey's *The Younger Sister* displays an Elizabeth Bowen theme in an Agatha Christie setting. A woman, married to a dullish business man and living in a very English middle-class village, has an affair with a wild novelist which distresses her puritanical younger sister, the head prefect of her school and confidante of its awe-inspiring headmistress. The girl tries to save her sister by taking over the novelist herself and at the end the book, which has balanced precariously between bitter-sweet comedy of the heart and sheer novelette, comes down heavily on the wrong side. It shows a slightly inbred devotion to craftsmanship and a pleasantly cruel sense of fun; but it lacks the rougher virtues which distinguish the boom-slump of genius from the even achievement of talent.

Miss Sigrid de Lima's *Captain's Beach* is a first novel about a lodging-house in the dock area of New York and must contain echoes of every experiment ever made in fiction. It uses the "Stream of Consciousness" as a means, not an end, is irreverently brilliant in description—there is a metaphor for everything—and conveys the greyness of life by a narrative pace so lagging that nothing seems worth attention at all. The loves of a crippled lodger and the daughter of the house are mingled with character studies of the feckless father and the enormous, ruthless, tender mother. Three tattered crones form what the author no doubt thought of as a chorus, and the memory of the previous lodger, who appears in person only on the last page, is significant without being significant of anything in particular. Like so many books of the kind it is sensitive, talented and deeply felt; but I found it hard to get through. It seemed a sacrifice of genuine ability to outmoded literary fashion.

Of Miss Enid Bagnold's novels I had read only the charming but light-weight "National Velvet" and was completely unprepared for the quality of *The Loved and Envid*, an astonishing book. It has an unpromising setting—the palatial homes of an international aristocracy still incredibly rich after two wars—and shows once more how unimportant choice of material can be. It is a study of old age in circles sufficiently remote from the material world to concentrate on the nuances of personal relationships. The diversity of characters and scenes, the proud complexity of the construction and the range and fullness of the writing raise it far above most contemporary fiction. I read it as slowly as I could, and that is real praise from anyone reviewing a mixed bag of novels.

R. G. G. PRICE



"I've found my glasses—you can all stop looking for them."



### Welfare States

To have followed Marie Louise Berneri on her *Journey Through Utopia* is to be left with a feeling of gratitude that none of those who have conceived the ideal State has been in a position to realize his conception. For they have been totalitarians almost to a man, and the price of citizenship in their perfected commonwealths would be abject submission to the most ruthless regimentation. Miss Berneri, who died at the age of thirty-one before her book could be published, conducts us to all the famous landmarks and many less familiar ones, and the prospect, even where Plato or More is lord of the territory, is on the whole a grim one. Indeed, it was only in William Morris's Paradise-on-Thames that Miss Berneri, who was an anarchist, could discover the authentic and congenial air of freedom. Nevertheless she has bequeathed us a comprehensive and valuable survey, copious in quotation and acute in comment, of one of the more thankless fields of human ingenuity.

F. B.

### Memoirs of a Self-made Young Lady

"Apart from those grey days wasted at school . . . I had an ideal childhood." Thus Miss Allanah Harper sums up the Edwardian and Georgian escapades enshrined in *All Trivial Fond Records*. Her ideal childhood was devoted to adventurous and unprincipled deviations from the golden mediocrity imposed on only bantlings of the very rich; for these latter, a consulting engineer and his wife, jettisoned Allanah's education at frequent intervals to attend a wedding at Hong Kong, the electrifying of the Rand mines, the opening of the Assouan dam—or any other jaunt on business or pleasure. So the child ran wild over half the globe, perceptively shedding the values of her set and substituting a better equipment of her own. As a baby she preferred feeding animals to gormandizing at parties; and a childish visit to an Alsatian château flowered in a passion for French literature at the "finishing-school" age. Altogether, a poor hand gallantly played and recalled with conspicuous animation.

H. F. E.

### A Palace in the Mountains

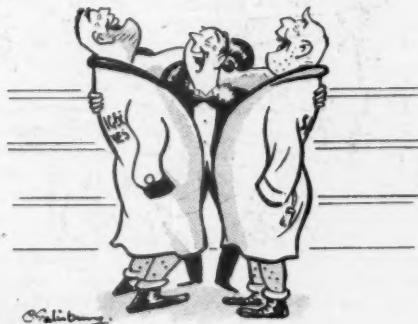
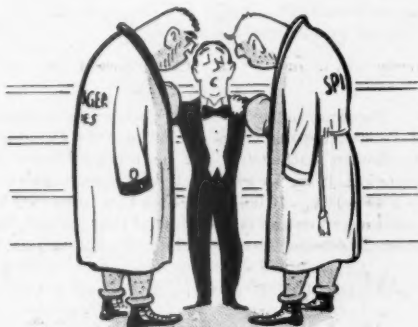
From a rather slow start Elisabeth Inglis-Jones develops in *Peacocks in Paradise* the unexpected true story of that fabulous Thomas Johnes, whose multitudinous hectic enthusiasms flared for a few years about the end of the eighteenth century before the bewildered rural population of Cardiganshire. Immensely wealthy, he brought artists and statesmen alike to the beautiful great house he built, but being cursed with an incurable prodigality he was always short of money, once, indeed, being driven to discharge all but ten of his indoor servants, yet on each recovery he turned to some new extravagance. To-day his amazing home, Hafod, survives only in a few old drawings; his

dairy herds and his forests, like his libraries and his statuary, are almost forgotten, his grottos, cascades and pleasaunces have returned to wild Nature, and he is most remembered by an inscription on a memorial to a pet robin, a favourite of his daughter's, herself the most brilliant and most pathetic of his treasures.

C. C. P.

### The Ironic Observer

Mr. Anthony Powell's first novel for twelve years is something of a period piece. The title phrase *A Question of Upbringing* might imply that the focus is on the narrator, one Jenkins, in the light of the early influences (school, life with a French family, university) he describes; but the "question" is open, for Jenkins is an unsubstantial figure, little more than the "dead-pan" chronicler of the odd people and events of his youth. The memorably comic episodes that make something like climaxes in the narrative are not put forward as having influenced his character. He is the reporter, his attitude detached but by implication appreciative both of the self-conscious wit of the



sophisticated pair with whom he shared a study at school and of the earnest eccentricity of some of the other personages. The style occasionally seems more elaborate than it used to be; the ironic vision, the attentive ear for absurdity, the unfailing sense of the ludicrous—these are active as always on every page. It is a richly entertaining book.

R. M.

### Sage in Slippers

"You are Shaw-proof," her employer once admitted to Miss Blanche Patch, and certainly the eyebrows of Shavian idolaters will rise at the astringent tone of her *Thirty Years With G. B. S.* Shaw was content that his faithful secretary, daughter of a Conservative parson, stood beyond his spell; though they worked closely together for so long they never discussed his politics or philosophy, and, as much of her time was spent in keeping at bay hordes of hysterical admirers, no doubt he valued her detachment. This is a balanced and intelligent book that adds considerably to our knowledge of the domestic Shaw, who was often silent, who ate his strange messes to the clatter of the radio, who knew so little of the ordinary pleasures of life, and who, says Miss Patch, was essentially modest. If it lacks warmth, so did he, and at any rate its cool and amused dissection brings out the greatness that was tangled by such curious perversities.

E. O. D. K.

### Act of Faith

The significance of Douglas Hyde's autobiographical *I Believed* lies not in his conversion from Communism to Roman Catholicism, for he reveals himself as a chronic believer to whom a rigid, comprehensive code is a necessity. It lies in the fact that organized Communism can entrap one so clear of thought and fundamentally attached to old standards of truth, and can hold

him so long even after he has discovered the cynicism and brutality that lie behind it all. What sinister thrall it is that Communism exercises, Mr. Hyde himself cannot expound; it rests, apparently, as firmly on faith as any religion. Even after his conversion Mr. Hyde—who, as news editor of the *Daily Worker*, knew all the leading Communists of this country and was an adept in Communist procedure—speaks with respect of the energy and devotion of his former associates. For anyone who wants a clearer idea of what we are up against in Communism this book is required reading.

B. A. Y.

### A Fox-eye View

Between the territory of the field-naturalists and that where Beatrix Potter staked her claim lies the country inhabited by Mr. C. D. Adams' *Red Vagabond*. Animals there do not wear trousers nor go shopping, but have delightful names which no field-naturalist would recognize. The hero, a fox of course, is called Tag, his two vixens Stardust and Greylight, the crow is Crark, the willow warbler Tuee. Tag, a few (mostly fox-hunting) people, foxes that he fights, birds and beasts that he stalks are the *dramatis personæ*. This is a dangerous country for authors, the false human-thinking note all too easily slips in, but Mr. Adams has many interesting details of wild life to tell—inevitably some authorities will disagree with him—and loves his subject. He does not always write with distinction, but sometimes, as in the description of the great snow, he is well up in the first flight. The many illustrations by D. J. Watkins-Pitchford are a perfect accompaniment.

B. E. S.

### Books Reviewed Above

- A Short History of the English Novel*. S. D. Neill. (Jarrolds, 12/6)  
*The Younger Sister*. Isobel Strachey. (Jonathan Cape, 10/6)  
*Captain's Beach*. Sigrid de Lima. (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 10/6)  
*The Loved and Envied*. Enid Bagnold. (Heinemann, 10/6)  
*Journey Through Utopia*. Marie Louise Berneri. (Routledge, 16/-)  
*All Trivial Fond Records*. Allannah Harper. (The Grey Walls Press, 12/6)  
*Peacocks in Paradise*. Elisabeth Inglis-Jones. (Faber, 18/-)  
*A Question of Upbringing*. Anthony Powell. (Heinemann, 9/6)  
*Thirty Years With G. B. S.* Blanche Patch. (Gollancz, 12/6)  
*I Believed*. Douglas Hyde. (Heinemann, 10/6)  
*Red Vagabond*. C. D. Adams. (Batchworth Press, 10/6)

### Other Recommended Books

*Paris Sketchbook*. Ronald Searle and Kaye Webb. (Saturn Press, 15/-) Journal of a Paris visit in the spring of last year: pages of drawings large and small, admirably reproduced, with a running accompaniment of notes by the artist's wife. Entertaining, evocative, envy-producing, and a mine of visual pleasure.

*The Sleeping House Party*. Elisabeth Lambert. (Michael Joseph, 9/6) Promising first novel about murders among sophisticated Australians. Plot and characters original: writing talented: comedy sadly arch.



## SUCCESS STORY

I HAD been throwing crumbs to the sparrows in the park for two or three minutes before it occurred to me how closely they resembled a couple of football teams. Not, of course, the highly trained gladiators who draw the thousands at White Hart Lane or at Highbury; they had none of the co-ordinated precision movements which win applause from the terraces. The resemblance was rather to the innumerable humble devotees who battle with little skill but much enthusiasm on a thousand recreation grounds up and down the country, with no witnesses other than the linesmen, the two hon. secs., and the home goalkeeper's young lady.

Like most such teams the sparrows had little sense of positional play. They bunched terribly. Where the crumb was, there, as far as possible, the whole crowd of birds would be, kicking, scrambling, pecking, jostling, pushing, and generally not playing to the whistle. But it was not only in the mass that the resemblance to a set of footballers held. It was true also of individual members of the teams, if I may so describe them. That thrusting, aggressive sparrow always at the very heart of things, what was he but the bustling centre forward whose one idea is the shortest route to goal? And that equally robust, rock-like sparrow who so resolutely and so regularly barred his way and disputed possession of the crumb with him, what else was he but our old friend the stopper centre half? And there was a perky, ubiquitous sparrow who led the most diverting breakaways; was it far-fetched to liken his rôle to that of the scheming inside forward? Even his ragged underfeathers were reminiscent of the famous Alex James pants. Nor was it difficult to identify the wingers of the sparrow world, hovering light and speedy on the edge of the conflict to snap up the loose crumb.

But there was one sparrow to whom, as I watched, I became particularly endeared, because he reminded me of the way I used to



*"... and if the little fellow gives you any more trouble, Mrs. Harrington, clout him."*

play football myself. It was my misfortune as a footballer that I never succeeded in being where the ball was. With the best intentions in the world I always took up a position which the ball had just left or was about to fail to reach. If I moved somewhere in anticipation of a pass, it was never made, or, if made, was intercepted; if I abandoned all idea of positional play and rushed determinedly into the mêlée it was a thousand to one that some gigantic kick would transfer play to the other end just before I got there. My footballing career was one long, ardent, but abortive effort to catch up with the game. A statistically minded friend calculated, on the basis of data I supplied, that over the years I ran 93·7 miles for every time I kicked a football.

This sparrow was like that. Don't think he wasn't keen; he was

—keen as mustard. There he stood, time and again, with his bright eye fixed unwaveringly on me as I held the crumb in my hand, simply bursting with determination to get at it this time; tiny muscles flexed, beak thrust forward, his whole being braced for the kick-off. And then the crumb would fall, and off he'd go—hell for leather in the wrong direction. One could almost feel his despair as he'd turn, his wing dragging for a moment with the bitterness of it all, and then, rallying pluckily, tear back into the fray in time to see the crumb disappear down some small but voracious throat.

I became determined that this poor, blundering sparrow, with whom I felt a profound spiritual kinship, should be fed. I began to favour him shamelessly—or, rather, I attempted to do so, for he

persistently thwarted all my efforts on his behalf. I tried feinting to throw the bread in a given direction in order to lead the other birds on a false scent, but this proved worse than useless, for he was invariably duped more completely than any of them, flying furiously in the direction my arm had taken and then looking about for the bread in a bewilderment so compounded of eagerness and ineptitude that it cut me to the heart. If, on the other hand, I really threw it, the wretched bird hung back, suspecting a trap. To signal my intention I looked at him as meaningly as anyone ever looked at a bird, but in vain. When I tried flinging several crumbs at once his reaction was to look at them all in hopeless indecision and flutter uncertainly from one to the other until all were gone. He was still hungry long after all the original birds had been gorged to repletion and had flown away to be replaced by others. The thing seemed hopeless.

Seemed, but was not. Sooner or later an hour strikes, for men and

sparrows. In the autumn of my footballing career a day came when a stray ball rolled miraculously to my feet in front of an open goal and when, still more miraculously, I neither ballooned it over the bar, nor got my legs entangled together, nor fell beneath the assault of some hulking great full back. Avoiding all these perils, I kicked the ball—shall I ever forget it?—hard and true into the back of the net, to trouble the scorers (delightful phrase) for the only time in fifteen years. So, now, with the sparrow. A greedy little rival went flying over his head with a bit of bread half as big as itself in its mouth. The piece broke in mid-air and fell right at my sparrow's feet. It was his big chance, and, after a fleeting moment of delighted incredulity, he took it with the calmness of a veteran.

I did not stay long in the park after that. Apart from the fact that it was time for me to get back to the office, it is a little difficult to explain to a perfect stranger why one has just shouted "Shoot!" to a sparrow.

## CONVERSATION WITH A BUTCHER'S CASHIER

LADY in the glass gazebo,  
Overlaid in sober green,  
What departed glories haunt you  
On this modern, meatless scene?

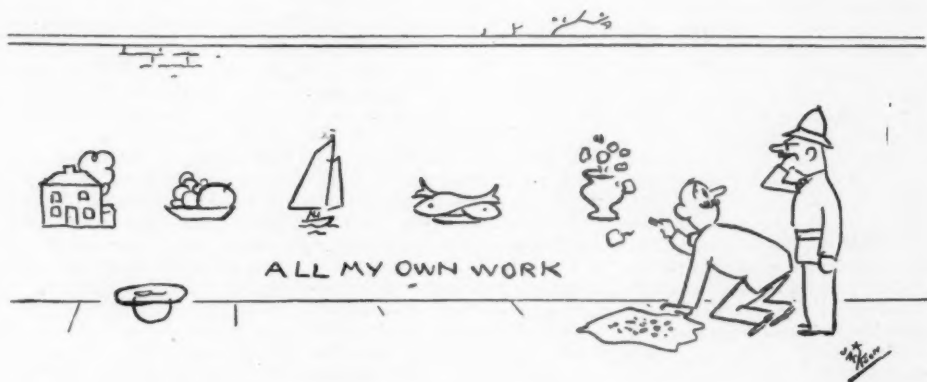
*Sometimes on a winter's evening  
When the power is ebbing low  
Phantom porkers, pale and portly,  
Dance before me, row on row.*

*Legs of lamb are seen suspended  
Where the alien rabbit hangs ;  
Sides of beef crowd in upon me  
In phantasmagoric gangs.*

*Ectoplasmic steaks and sirloins  
Fill the air, while on the phone  
Ghostly voices ask for "Something  
Nice for Sunday—not much bone."*

*Briskets bloom in plump profusion,  
Kidneys overflow their bowls ;  
Spectral chauffeurs shuffle past me,  
Carting cutlets to the Rolls.*

Lady in the glass gazebo,  
Come, I pray you, back to earth;  
Give me change and let me hurry  
Home with my tenpennyworth.



"They're murals."

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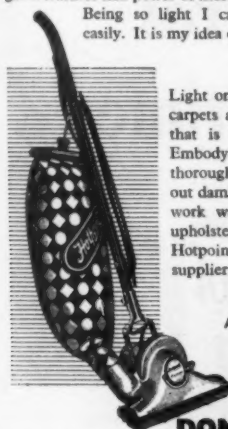


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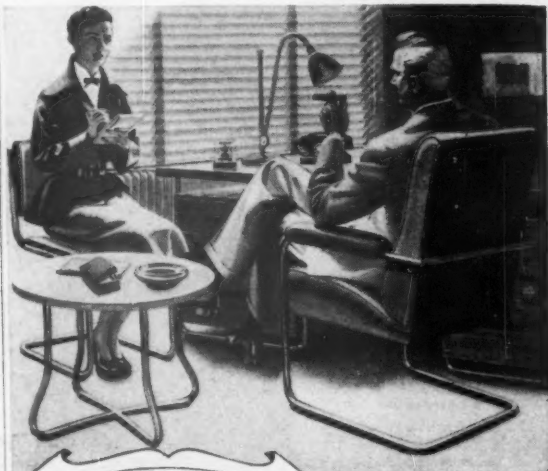
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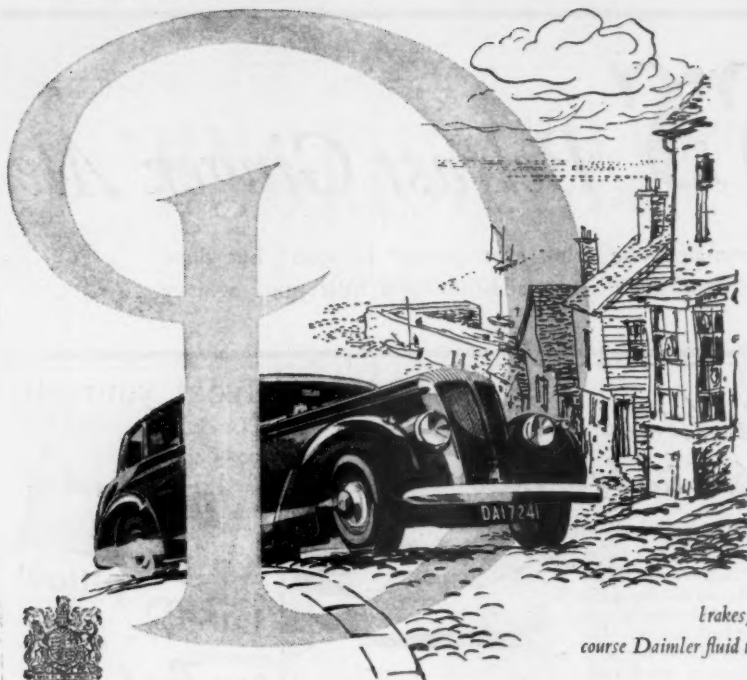
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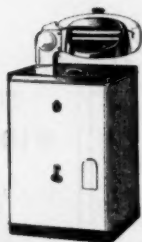
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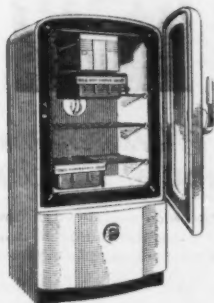
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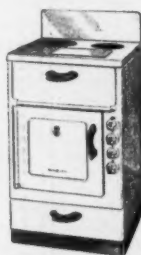
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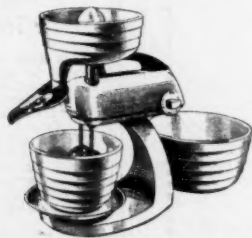
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# CARBON



**CARBON** is one of the most widely distributed of the elements, for it is an essential constituent of all living matter. Carbon appears in the crystalline form as diamond and graphite and in the amorphous form as charcoal. Combined with other elements it gives innumerable chemicals all of which are vital to our existence. Carbon atoms readily join with each other, and with those of other elements. They will link up into rings, form long chains of atoms like strings of beads, and even branch out to make complex three-dimensional molecules. The study of carbon compounds is so important that it has become a specialized branch of science known as Organic Chemistry. Hundreds of thousands of different molecules have already been made from carbon atoms in conjunction with those of two or three other elements, such as hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen. An almost infinite number of new ones remain to be discovered by the organic chemist.

Since 1856, when Sir William H. Perkin made the first synthetic dye, mauve, the manufacture of dyestuffs has been a focal point of the organic chemical industry. The dyestuffs made by I.C.I. are carbon compounds, and recent I.C.I. research into carbon derivatives has resulted in such epoch-making discoveries as new anti-malarial drugs, new textile fibres like 'Ardil', and 'Gammexane', a revolutionary insecticide.



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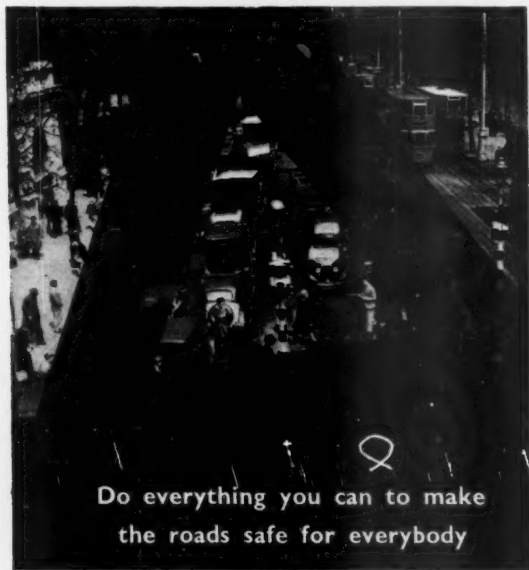
As long as there's a road from here to there, the majority of manufacturers and merchants will continue to prefer to use their own transport especially in these days of fluctuating rates. It's quicker, more reliable, and, because it is under their own control, always available when it is wanted. Furthermore their vehicles can be built to suit their own particular goods, whilst packing and loading, being carried out by the producer's own staff, can be properly supervised.

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# TYRE-BURSTS MADE HARMLESS BY NEW TWIN-CHAMBER SAFETY TUBE

## PRACTICAL LIFE INSURANCE FOR FAMILY DRIVER

Many family motorists now take to the road at week-ends with an easier mind than ever before. They know for certain that, if they get a tyre-burst, there will be no violent swerve, no collision, no danger of any kind. For they have fitted a new kind of inner tube — the Goodyear Lifeguard — which makes tyre bursts harmless as a slow leak. The diagram below shows in detail how this twin-chamber safety tube prevents axle-drop, holding

the car perfectly steady while the driver brings it to an unhurried, safe stop, *every time*. In a thousand tests, Lifeguards have never failed.

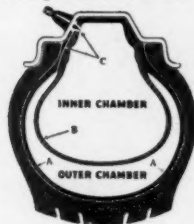
These sturdily built new safety tubes — the greatest advance in road safety since the introduction of 4-wheel brakes — outlast as many as three normal tubes.

They are an economical and very practical form of family life-insurance.

### Cross-section view of the NEW LIFEGUARD SAFETY TUBE

The Lifeguard consists of a normal rubber outer wall (A), a strong 2-ply inner tube (B), and a patented 2-way valve (C). Air is pumped through the valve, and inflates the inner and outer chambers simultaneously. The 2-way valve also acts as a pressure equaliser vent, through which air can pass between the two chambers. Because pressure is equal in both chambers the free-floating inner tube moves clean away from any sharp object that

pierces through to it. As a result, when the tyre cover and outer wall of the tube give way or explode, the weight on that wheel is carried by the inner tube, inside which 60% of the air is safely held. Axle-drop is so slight that there is no instability, and no dangerous swerve. You simply bring the car to a gradual straight stop, in complete safety.



A TYRE-BURST HERE WOULD BE  
SERIOUS — PERHAPS TRAGIC

For your family's sake **FIT**

# LIFEGUARD

by **GOOD YEAR**

**SAFETY  
TUBES**